NATO

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The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance dominated by the USA, consisting of 29 North American and European countries originally started by the United States, Canada, and 10 European countries with the intent to contain the Soviet Union. The combined military spending of all NATO members constitutes over 70% of the global total. Members have committed to reach or maintain military spending of at least 2% of GDP by 2024.

Quotes

Excerpt from NATO's home page

NATO promotes democratic values and enables members to consult and cooperate on defence and security-related issues to solve problems, build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict. ~NATO web 'about' (https://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index.html)

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is one of the world's major international institutions. It is a political and military alliance that brings together 29 member countries from Europe and North America. These countries meet to cooperate in the field of security and defence. In this respect, NATO provides a unique link between these two continents for political and security cooperation.
  As the nature of threats changes, so must the methods of preserving peace. NATO is reorienting its defence capabilities towards today's threats. It is adapting forces and developing multinational approaches to deal with terrorism, failed states and other security threats such as weapons of mass destruction.
  - NATO, What is NATO? (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20190218_190218-WhatIsNATO_en.pdf)
- Each member country has a permanent delegation at NATO's political headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. It is headed by an ambassador, who represents his/her government in the Alliance's consultation and decision-making process. The North Atlantic Council is the most important political decision-making body within the Organization. It meets at different levels and is chaired by the Secretary General of NATO, who helps members reach agreement on key issues.
- All decisions within each of NATO's committees are reached by consensus. A "NATO decision" is therefore the expression of the collective will of all member countries. NATO has very few

permanent forces of its own. When an operation is agreed by the North Atlantic Council, members contribute forces on a voluntary basis. These forces return to their countries once the mission is completed.
It is the role of the military command structure to coordinate and conduct these operations. This structure consists of headquarters and bases located in different member countries. NATO's day-to-day activities, civil and military structures and security investment programmes are funded through common budgets to which member governments contribute in accordance with an agreed cost-sharing formula.

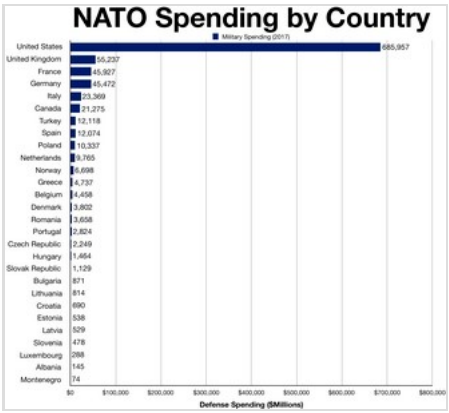
- NATO, How does NATO work? (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20190218_190218-WhatIsNATO_en.pdf)

Expanding upon Trump's confrontational approach... Biden met with NATO leaders and instructed them to plan on two wars, China and Russia. According to Chomsky: "This is beyond insanity." ...the group is carrying out provocative acts when diplomacy is really needed. This is an extraordinarily dangerous situation... throughout history political parties that rely upon lies bring society down to its knees in piles of shameless destruction. ~ Robert Hunziker (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/07/12/a-world-of-total-illusion-and-fantasy-an-interview-with-noam-chomsky/)

About Nato

1949

- [I]f the Kaiser in World War I and the Fuehrer in World War II had been on notice that an armed attack against any of the friendly nations with whom we associate ourselves would be considered a cause even for us to consider and study and determine whether or not we would enter into the common defense, it would have stopped both those wars before they occurred, and in my opinion that one single designation of a commanlty of interest in the North Atlantic pact...is the best assurance against world war III.
  - Arthur Vandenberg, speech in the United States Senate (14 February 1949), quoted in *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 81st Congress. First Session. Volume 95—Part 1. January 3, 1949, to February 17, 1949* (1949), p. 1164
- [T]his Pact is a purely defensive arrangement for the common security of the countries who join it, and it is not directed against anyone. If we are accused of ganging up against any country or group of countries I should say simply: "Examine the text. There is no secrecy about it, and there are no secret clauses. You will not find in the text any provision which threatens the security or the well-being of any nation." No nation innocent of aggressive intentions need have the slightest fear or apprehension about it.
  - Ernest Bevin, speech in the House of Commons (18 March 1949) (https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1949/mar/18/north-atlantic-pact#column_2533)



Defense Expenditures of NATO Countries (2010-2017) (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_03/20180315_180315-pr2018-16-en.pdf)

- [T]he Pact must be regarded as a concrete expression of the identity of view long held among the Western nations. It recognises the common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law between nations. It is not elaborate; its simplicity is apparent, but I can assure the House that it is based on an understanding and determination to preserve our way of life.
  - Ernest Bevin, speech in the House of Commons (18 March 1949) (https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1949/mar/18/north-atlantic-pact#column_2534)

Sites in Kosovo and southern Central Serbia where NATO used munitions with depleted uranium

- The paramount purposes of the pact are peace and security... It is clear that the North Atlantic Pact is not an improvisation. It is the statement of the facts and lessons from two world wars in less than half a century. That experience has taught us that the control of Europe by a single aggressive, unfriendly Power would constitute an intolerable threat to the national security of the United States... We must make it clear that armed attack will be met by collective defence, prompt and effective. That is the meaning of the North Atlantic Pact.
  - Dean Acheson, radio broadcast (18 March 1949), quoted in *The Times* (19 March 1949), p. 4

Designed to pump out a high volume of fire within a short period, rocket artillery systems are particularly dangerous in their ability to obliterate a position before units have a chance to take cover. This is the best of what NATO has to offer... (the M270 MLRS)... ~National Interest

- [The North Atlantic Pact is] an instrument of tremendous moral power. It lays before the world the desires of great nations to live in peace and to be free from molestation and hostile pressures by aggressive States. It mobilizes the forces of peace against the forces of exploitation and war. It is a shining monument to the highest and finest international ethics. It is a symbol of national integrity and good faith between nations.
  - Tom Connally, statement quoted in *The Times* (19 March 1949), p. 4
- The Atlantic Treaty is not aggressive. It is purely defensive. Those who attack it as offensive do so from a bad conscience. They take just the same line as the Nazis did when every attempt by the nations to get together was denounced as the encirclement of Germany. We seek by the pact to gain for the nations a sense of security which they so ardently desire. We seek by the organization of security to make the world safe against aggression and by pooling of strength to reduce the burden of armaments.
  - Clement Attlee, speech in Glasgow (10 April 1949), quoted in *The Times* (11 April 1949), p. 4

1997

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and its member States, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other hand, hereinafter referred to as NATO and Russia, based on an enduring political commitment undertaken at the highest political level, will build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security.
- NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries. They share the goal of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation. The present Act reaffirms the determination of NATO and Russia to give concrete substance to their shared commitment to build a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe, whole and free, to the benefit of all its peoples. Making this commitment at the highest political level marks the beginning of a fundamentally new relationship between NATO and Russia. They intend to develop, on the basis of common interest, reciprocity and transparency a strong, stable and enduring partnership.
  - ***Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation*** *signed in Paris, France 27 May 1997, NATO official texts* (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm) (May 1997)

I will always be there with NATO, but they have to pay their way. I'm fully in favor of NATO, but I don't wanna be taken advantage of. ~President Donald Trump

2001

- NATO should dispose of large fragments of depleted uranium (DU) ammunition remaining in Kosovo 18 months after the conflict ended, because they represent an unnecessary risk to health, a UN study says. Further details of the preliminary results of the UN Environment Programme investigation emerged yesterday as the EU began an inquiry into whether there is a link between radioactive military debris and the death from cancer of soldiers who served in the Balkans.
  - *NATO urged to clean up its uranium debris in Kosovo, Call for ban on radioactive shells as EU investigates link with soldiers' cancer deaths, The Guardian* (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/jan/05/balkans), Peter Capella in Geneva and Owen Bowcott (4 Jan 2001)

The Economist

The transatlantic alliance deserves a resounding “happy birthday”. It kept the peace for 40 years of cold war, protected western Europe from communism, helped stabilise central Europe after the Soviet Union’s collapse and enabled unprecedented prosperity... The allies are getting on with a long to-do list drawn up at last year’s summit, from ambitious readiness plans to new command centres. ~The Economist

- Concern has been mounting rapidly throughout Europe over the effects of depleted uranium (DU) munitions used by NATO in Bosnia and Yugoslavia during the 1994-95 and 1999 wars. At least 12 soldiers... who served in the Balkans have died of leukemia or other forms of cancer; several... are being treated for cancer... Other soldiers and aid workers have experienced symptoms including “chronic fatigue, hair loss and various types of cancer” (New York Times,

1/7/01) (https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/07/world/radiation-from-balkan-bombing-alarms-europe.html)...
Italy, Belgium, France, Portugal and Germany have all demanded that NATO conduct a thorough investigation into the health and environmental impacts of DU, and have expressed distrust of Pentagon and NATO reassurances (Agence France Presse, 1/8/01). Reports in the European press suggest that the situation is causing serious divisions within the alliance, with the conservative London Times asserting that the soldiers' "Deaths Threaten the Unity of NATO" (1/6/01)... Germany has called on NATO to ban the toxic and radioactive metal (The Independent, 1/9/01), while the United Nations' war crimes tribunal has offered to make available all relevant records on the Kosovo war, raising the question of the legality of NATO's use of DU (Agence France Presse, 1/8/01). Since the new year, stories about the DU controversy have been running almost daily in every major British newspaper, with the Guardian (1/8/01) and Independent (1/6/01) each running editorials calling for a NATO investigation into DU's health effects...

- *Depleted Coverage of NATO's Depleted Uranium Weapons, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR)* (https://fair.org/press-release/depleted-coverage-of-natos-depleted-uranium-weapons/) (10 January 2001)

...it's the military industrial complex that needs more weapons sales, and the Russians have always been the bogeyman... And even though we had 20 years of peace and tranquility with the Russians, now they are being vilified again... the increase in the number of weapons all the countries are manufacturing and selling, is big business. ~Ann Wright

- Meanwhile, in the U.S.—the country most responsible by far for DU contamination—newspapers have relegated most of their coverage to news briefs and short wire stories. The only U.S. newspaper in the Nexis media database to have run an editorial on the current controversy is the Seattle Times (1/6/01). Big picture questions about the extensive use of DU since the Gulf War, its lasting impact on civilian populations and the record of official deception around DU have been largely ignored in both print and broadcast reports... According to a search of the Nexis database, no major U.S. newspaper, magazine, television show or wire service has reported on the COE's suggestion that NATO countries deliberately violated international law. Despite questions raised by veterans, health researchers and international organizations like the UN, NATO's use of DU in Kosovo has received almost no sustained media attention, either during or after the war. One war time report on *ABC's Nightline* (4/1/99) criticized Serbian state media's coverage of the conflict, highlighting what it described as **"this astonishing claim" from a Belgrade news report: "They [NATO forces] even use radioactive weapons… which are forbidden by the Geneva Convention**." Astonishing, perhaps, but true; at the time, the Pentagon had already admitted using DU in Kosovo. As for the possibility that NATO violated the Geneva Conventions, ABC has never returned to it.
  - *Depleted Coverage of NATO's Depleted Uranium Weapons, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR)* (https://fair.org/press-release/depleted-coverage-of-natos-depleted-uranium-weapons/) (10 January 2001)

2007

- Our recommitment to Afghanistan must include increasing NATO forces, suspending the debilitating restrictions on when and how those forces can fight, expanding the training and equipping of the Afghan National Army through a long-term partnership with NATO to make it more professional and multiethnic, and deploying significantly more foreign police trainers.
  - John McCain in *An Enduring Peace Built on Freedom, Securing America's Future, Foreign Affairs Magazine* (https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2007-11-01/enduring-peace-built-freedom) (November 2007)

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has praised the United Kingdom for maintaining a continuous at-sea nuclear deterrent for 50 years in a letter to Prime Minister Theresa May. At least one Royal Navy submarine carrying nuclear missiles has been on undersea patrol at all times since April 1969. ~NATO News

2009

- One of the deceptive clichés of Western accounts of post World War II history is that NATO was constructed as a defensive arrangement to block the threat of a Soviet attack on Western Europe. This is false. It is true that Western propaganda played up the Soviet menace, but many key U.S. and Western European statesmen recognized that a Soviet invasion was not a real threat. The Soviet Union had been devastated, and while in possession of a large army it was exhausted and needed time for recuperation. The United States was riding high, the war had revitalized its economy, it suffered no war damage, and it had the atomic bomb in its arsenal, which it had displayed to the Soviet Union by killing a quarter of a million Japanese civilians at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Hitting the Soviet Union before it recovered or had atomic weapons was discussed in Washington, even if rejected in favor of “containment,” economic warfare, and other forms of destabilization. NSC 68, dated April 1950, while decrying the great Soviet menace, explicitly called for a program of destabilization aimed at regime change in that country, finally achieved in 1991...
  In reality, NATO, as an aggressive global arm of U.S. and other local affiliated imperialisms, poses a serious threat to global peace and security. It is about to celebrate its 60th anniversary, and while it should have been liquidated back in 1991, it has instead expanded, taking on a new and threatening role traced out in its 1999 Strategic Concept and enjoying a frighteningly malignant growth.
  - Edward S. Herman *NATO: the Imperial Pitbull, Global Research* (https://www.globalresearch.ca/nato-the-imperial-pitbull/11989), (23 January 2009)

In reality, NATO, as an aggressive global arm of U.S. and other local affiliated imperialisms, poses a serious threat to global peace and security. ~Edward S. Herman in *NATO: the Imperial Pitbull,* (https://www.globalresearch.ca/nato-the-imperial-pitbull/11989),

2011

- NATO this morning detained a tanker in Malta that was due to ship fuel from Italy to a port in western Libya, a senior Libyan source told Petroleum Economist. The Jupiter was destined for a port within the Qadhafi-held east and the well-placed sourced said it was carrying 12,750 tonnes of gasoline for use by the regime's military forces. A Nato official told Petroleum Economist that the ship was boarded "and told it cannot deliver its gasoline because fuel is being diverted to regime forces". He added that the ship was now at anchor off Tripoli awaiting instruction from its owner. Nato added: "It is the Qadhafi regime which is depriving its own citizens of vehicle fuel by diverting reserves for military use. Nato naval forces can deny access to vessels entering or leaving Libyan ports if there is reliable intelligence to suggest that the vessel or its cargo will be used to support attacks or threats on civilians, either directly or indirectly." Stopping a ship in international waters or within Libyan maritime territory “could be considered an act of war”, according to Martijn Feldbrugge, a sanctions expert at Business Sanctions and Consulting Nieuwediep...Preventing fuel supplies to the regime rests on assumptions that gasoline shortages could hamper Qadhafi’s military, or trigger an uprising in Tripoli by locals. Such a strategy could yet backfire, Shashank Joshi, a military expert and associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute in London, said. “Fuel shortages will hurt the civilians in Tripoli first, not the military. The anger that causes may not be directed at the regime but at NATO.”
  - *EXCLUSIVE: NATO arrests Libya-bound oil tanker, Petroleum Economist*, Derrick Brown (https://www.petroleum-economist.com/articles/midstream-downstream/tankers/2011/exclusive-nato-arrests-libya-bound-oil-tanker) (19 May 2011)

Huge reverence for NATO is matched by how dangerous NATO has become. NATO’s continual expansion -- all the way to Russia’s borders -- has significantly increased the chances that the world’s two nuclear superpowers will get into direct military conflict. ~Norman Solomon

Lockheed Martin has been awarded a $1.14 billion contract for Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems for Poland, Bahrain and Romania... Lockheed Martin... has produced more than 25,000 GMLRS through 2016 for the United States and NATO allies. ~Allen Cone/UPI

2014

- It is enlightening to see how pugnacious the U.S. establishment...has been in dealing with the Ukraine crisis. The crisis arguably began when the Yanukovich government rejected an EU bailout program in favor of one offered by Russia. The mainstream media (MSM) have virtually suppressed the fact that **the EU proposal was not only less generous than the one offered by Russia, but that, whereas the Russian plan did not preclude further Ukrainian deals with the EU, the EU plan would have required a cut-off of further Russian arrangements.** And **whereas the Russian deal had no military clauses, that of the EU required that Ukraine affiliate with NATO.** Insofar as the MSM dealt with this set of offers, they not only suppressed the exclusionary and militarized character of the EU offer, they tended to view the Russian deal as an improper use of economic leverage, “bludgeoning,” but the EU proposal was “constructive and reasonable” (Ed., NYT, November 20, 2014). Double standards seem to be fully

internalized within the U.S. establishment. The protests that ensued in Ukraine were surely based in part on real grievances against a corrupt government, but they were also pushed along by right-wing groups and by U.S. and allied encouragement and support that increasingly had an anti-Russian and pro-accelerated regime change flavor.

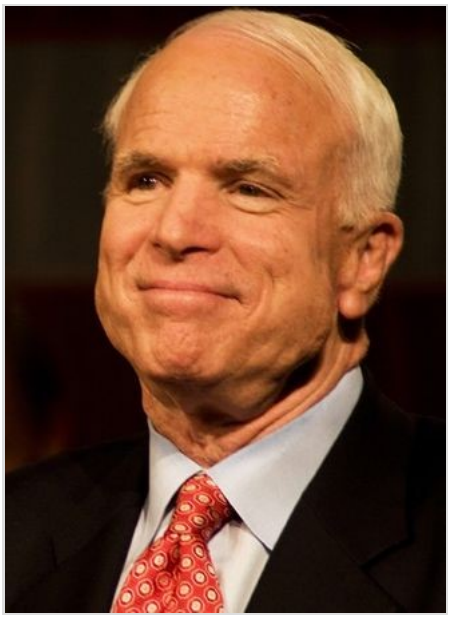
- Edward S. Herman in ***War is Our Business and Business Looks Good,*** *Z Magazine* (https://zcomm.org/zmagazine/war-is-our-business-and-business-looks-good/) (28 June 2014)

NATO claims to strive for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. But, NATO has never been such a system. It is the largest military alliance in the world with the largest military spending and nuclear stockpiles. It is both the main driver for a new arms race and the main obstacle to a nuclear weapons-free world. ~ World Beyond War (https://worldbeyondwar.org/)

- Russia and the West are at war – over fruits, veggies, pork and bank loans. The cause is Ukraine, a vast emptiness formerly unknown to the western world, but now deemed a vital national security interest worthy of a risking a very scary war. Economic embargos such as those launched by the US against Russia may seem relatively harmless. They are not. Trade sanctions are a form of strategic warfare that is sometimes followed by bullets and shells. Think, for good example, of the 1940 US embargo against Japan that led Tokyo's fateful decision to go to war rather than face slow, economic strangulation... Frighteningly, today, there are senior officials in Washington and Moscow who are actually considering a head on clash in Ukraine between Russian forces and **NATO** – which is **an extension of US military power**. Intensifying attacks by Ukrainian government forces (quietly armed and financed by the US) against pro-Russian separatists and civilian targets in eastern Ukraine are increasing the danger that Moscow may intervene militarily to protect Ukraine's ethnic Russian minority. A full-scale military clash could begin with a Russian-declared 'no fly' zone over the eastern Ukraine such as the US imposed over Iraq. Moscow's aim would be to stop the bombing and shelling of Ukrainian rebel cities by Kiev's air force. Russia's leader, President Vladimir Putin, is under growing popular pressure to stop the killing of pro-Russian Ukrainians – who were Russian citizens until 1991.
  - Eric Margolis, What if There's a Real War in Ukraine? *Common Dreams* (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2014/08/09/what-if-theres-real-war-ukraine), August 9, 2014
- In response to threats from NATO that it will be expanding its military capabilities eastward, Russia on Tuesday countered by saying such moves will only result in military recalibrations of its own. Ahead of a NATO summit scheduled for later this week and citing repeated announcements by NATO Secretary- General Anders Fogh Rasmussen that a new military "spearhead"— a 4,000-soldier "rapid response" fighting force—would be positioned in eastern Europe, high-ranking Russian officials were pushing back. Public Chamber deputy secretary Sergei Ordzhonikidze, told a state news agency that Rasmussen's plans amounted to "military hysteria" and betrayed historic promises. He said Russia's only option would be to respond with "reciprocal measures" of its own. "When NATO troops are approaching our borders, of course, we develop a plan," said Ordzhonikidze. "It is a threat when troops are being stationed next to your border. I recall NATO's commitment not to expand the bloc's territory eastward … All that remains to us is to somehow oppose this expansion of NATO."
  - Jon Queally, NATO's "Military Hysteria" Undermines Hope For Peace In Ukraine, Says Russia,*MintPress News* (https://www.mintpressnews.com/natos-military-hysteria-undermine

s-hope-peace-ukraine-says-russia/196115/), September 2, 2014

- "There is one very interesting fact," Lavrov said Tuesday during a live TV interview, "that this [NATO] initiative appeared right after the meeting in Minsk where agreements on the process of the Contact Group were trying to find a commonly acceptable decision on the current domestic crisis in Ukraine." Lavrov categorized U.S. statements and Rasmussen's talk of NATO expansion as a conscious effort to undermine fragile peace efforts now underway between the Ukrainian rebels in the east and leaders of the Kiev government. It's quite unfortunate that such moods in strengthening the positions of the 'war party' are actively warmed up and urged on out of Washington and several European capitals, and more and more often out of Brussels and from the NATO Headquarters where the secretary-general of the North Atlantic Alliance with or without reason comes out with announcements that do not fall under his jurisdiction," Lavrov said.
  - Jon Queally, NATO's "Military Hysteria" Undermines Hope For Peace In Ukraine, Says Russia,*MintPress News* (https://www.mintpressnews.com/natos-military-hysteria-undermines-hope-peace-ukraine-says-russia/196115/), September 2, 2014



McCain conveyed the common madness of reverence for NATO -- and the common intolerance for anything that might approach a rational debate on whether it's a good idea to keep expanding an American-led military alliance to, in effect, push Russia into a corner. Doing so is understandably viewed from Russia as a dire threat... ~Norman Solomon

- The footage of President Obama strolling through the ancient ruins at Stonehenge was an apt bookend to the meeting of NATO, a Cold War relic that should have been abolished after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. But while hundreds of protesters marched through the streets calling for NATO to be dissolved — **"From Iraq to Ukraine, NATO only causes pain,**" they chanted — NATO leaders saw the crisis in Ukraine as an opportunity to breathe new life into the moribund military alliance. The recent NATO meeting in Wales was supposed to be about how to wind down NATO's 12-year military adventure in Afghanistan—without admitting the monumental failure of leaving behind a fractured, impoverished nation that can't even figure out who won the last election. Afghanistan, however, was barely mentioned. Nor was the disastrous NATO intervention in Libya that has resulted in a failed state rife with violence. And while there was some handwringing about how to deal with ISIS, it was clear most NATO countries did not want to join Obama in a new military quagmire. The meeting's main focus was the conflict in Ukraine, a conflict that NATO played a key role in creating.

The world is arming itself to the teeth... Global military spending last year rose to $1.8trn, says SIPRI—the highest level in real terms since reliable records began... ~ *Military spending around the world is booming, The Economist,* (https://www.economist.com/international/2019/04/28/military-spending-around-the-world-is-booming) (28 April 2019)

  - Medea Benjamin, Ukraine Conflict: Red Meat For Anemic NATO Alliance, (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2014/09/08/ukraine-conflict-red-meat-anemic-nato-alliance)

September 9, 2014

In July 2016... [John R.] Bolton denounced then-nominee Trump's suggestion that the U.S. not defend fellow NATO countries. (NATO is one international accord Bolton considers worthwhile.) He called Trump's statement "very disturbing" and "a dagger at the heart of the most successful political-military alliance in human history." ~The Atlantic

- A creature of the Cold War created in 1949 to defend Europe from Soviet expansion, NATO did not dissolve when the Soviet Union collapsed peacefully. But it did assure Russia that it would not expand eastwards beyond the reunified Germany, and it would not station significant numbers of troops in Eastern Europe. NATO broke the pledge. In 1999, it admitted three former Warsaw Pact countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. In 2004, it admitted the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Today the NATO security alliance covers 28 member states. It does not include Ukraine, but Ukraine is pushing for NATO membership. One does not have to sympathize with Putin's oligarchic authoritarianism or its annexation of Crimea to recognize the West's intimidation. When Ukraine's corrupt but elected president was overthrown in a US-backed coup, it was... [easy] for Russia to see the takeover of the neighboring state as a threat to its core interests.
  - Medea Benjamin, Ukraine Conflict: Red Meat For Anemic NATO Alliance, (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2014/09/08/ukraine-conflict-red-meat-anemic-nato-alliance) September 9, 2014
- The European Union and many of its countries, which used to take initiatives in the United Nations for peaceful settlements of conflict, are now one of the most important war assets of the U.S./NATO front. Many countries have also been drawn into complicity in breaking international law through U.S./U.K./NATO wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and so on.
  - Mairead Maguire in ***The Disturbing Expansion of the Military-Industrial Complex***, *Common Dreams*, (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2014/10/14/disturbing-expansion-military-industrial-complex) (14 October 2014)

2016

- There is a crisis brewing at the NATO-Russian border. It is no small matter. In his illuminating and judicious scholarly study of the region, Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands, Richard Sakwa writes — all too plausibly — that the "Russo-Georgian war of August 2008 was in effect the first of the 'wars to stop NATO enlargement;' the Ukraine crisis of 2014 is the second. It is not clear whether humanity would survive a third." The West sees NATO enlargement as benign. Not surprisingly, Russia, along with much of the Global South, has a different opinion, as do some prominent Western voices. George Kennan warned early on that NATO enlargement is a "tragic mistake," and he was joined by senior American statesmen in an open letter to the White House describing it as a "policy error of historic proportions."
  - Noam Chomsky, in *Chomsky: Who Rules the World? (https://billmoyers.com/story/chomsky-rules-world/)* *BillMoyers.com* (9 May 2016)
- The Western response to Russia's collapse was triumphalist. It was hailed as signaling "the

end of history," the final victory of Western capitalist democracy, almost as if Russia were being instructed to revert to its pre-World War I status as a virtual economic colony of the West.
NATO enlargement began at once, in violation of verbal assurances to Gorbachev that NATO forces would not move "one inch to the east" after he agreed that a unified Germany could become a NATO member — a remarkable concession, in the light of history... The possibility that NATO might expand beyond Germany was not discussed with Gorbachev, even if privately considered.
Soon, NATO did begin to move beyond, right to the borders of Russia. The general mission of NATO was officially changed to a mandate to protect "crucial infrastructure" of the global energy system, sea lanes and pipelines, giving it a global area of operations. Furthermore, under a crucial Western revision of the now widely heralded doctrine of "responsibility to protect," sharply different from the official UN version, NATO may now also serve as an intervention force under US command.

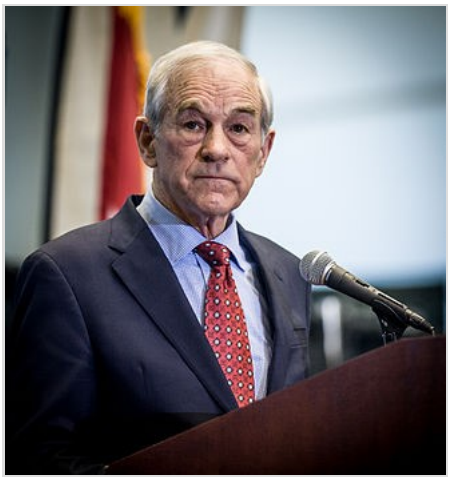
  - Noam Chomsky, in *Chomsky: Who Rules the World?* (https://billmoyers.com/story/chomsky-rules-world/) BillMoyers.com (9 May 2016)

- Of particular concern to Russia are plans to expand NATO to Ukraine. These plans were articulated explicitly at the Bucharest NATO summit of April 2008, when Georgia and Ukraine were promised eventual membership in NATO. The wording was unambiguous: "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO." With the "Orange Revolution" victory of pro-Western candidates in Ukraine in 2004, State Department representative Daniel Fried rushed there and "emphasized US support for Ukraine's NATO and Euro-Atlantic aspirations," as a WikiLeaks report revealed.
Russia's concerns are easily understandable. They are outlined by international relations scholar John Mearsheimer in the leading US establishment journal, Foreign Affairs (https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault). He writes that "the taproot of the current crisis [over Ukraine] is NATO expansion and Washington's commitment to move Ukraine out of Moscow's orbit and integrate it into the West," which Putin viewed as "a direct threat to Russia's core interests."... "Who can blame him?" Mearsheimer asks, pointing out that "Washington may not like Moscow's position, but it should understand the logic behind it."

  - Noam Chomsky, in *Chomsky: Who Rules the World?* (https://billmoyers.com/story/chomsky-rules-world/) BillMoyers.com (9 May 2016)

- I work on the assumption that most people really want peace. Because of this, there needs to be a lot of propaganda, along with lies, intimidation and fear mongering in order to get people to foolishly acquiesce to war. This week, news broke regarding the emails of NATO Commander (https://theintercept.com/2016/07/01/nato-general-emails/) and U.S. General Philip Breedlove. Apparently Breedlove was plotting behind the scenes against Obama, who was not as confrontational with Russia as Breedlove would have liked. All back-channels were used to put pressure on Obama and U.S. public opinion about what was happening in Ukraine. One would think that this would be a major story in the media. But after The Intercept broke the news (https://theintercept.com/2016/07/01/nato-general-emails/), it was picked up by a few other outlets, and then fell off the face of the Earth!
NATO should have disbanded after the Cold War, just as the Warsaw Pact did. Instead of disbanding, NATO proceeded to gobble up Eastern European countries that were formerly a part of the Warsaw Pact. The "regime change" and absorption of Ukraine into NATO would put them right on Russia's border. NATO is not a friend of peace. We don't need it.

- Ron Paul in *NATO Is Not A Friend of Peace* (http://www.ronpaullibertyreport.com/archives/ron-paul-nato-is-not-a-friend-of-peace) (5 July 2016)



NATO should have disbanded after the Cold War, just as the Warsaw Pact did... NATO is not a friend of peace. We don't need it. ~ Ron Paul

- We find troubling... NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's statement... that NATO members will agree to "further enhance NATOs military presence in the eastern part of the alliance," adding... its "biggest reinforcement since the Cold War." The likelihood of a military clash in the air or at sea – accidental or intentional – has grown sharply, the more so since, as we explain below, President Obama's control over top U.S./NATO generals, some of whom like to play cowboy, is tenuous. Accordingly we encourage you, as we did before the last NATO summit, to urge your NATO colleagues to bring a "degree of judicious skepticism" to the table at Warsaw – especially with regard to the perceived threat from Russia.
  Many of us have spent decades studying Moscow's foreign policy. We shake our heads in disbelief when we see Western leaders seemingly oblivious to what it means to the Russians to witness exercises on a scale not seen since Hitler's armies launched "Unternehmen Barbarossa" 75 years ago, leaving 25 million Soviet citizens dead. In our view, it is irresponsibly foolish to believe that Russian President Vladimir Putin will not take countermeasures... Putin does not have the option of trying to reassure his generals that what they hear and see from NATO is mere rhetoric and posturing... In sum, Russia is bound to react strongly to what it regards as the unwarranted provocation of large military exercises along its western borders, including in Ukraine.
  - Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) ***Merkel Urged to Temper NATO's Belligerence,*** *Open Letter from VIPS, Consortium News* (https://consortiumnews.com/2016/07/06/merkel-urged-to-temper-natos-belligerence/) (July 6, 2016)

2018

- President Donald Trump pressed allies to double their military spending target to 4% of GDP, while questioning NATO's value and bashing Germany for supporting a gas deal with Russia. After attacking North Atlantic Treaty Organization leaders for months for not meeting a 2% spending target, Mr. Trump said on Wednesday that the amount was too low.
  - Wall Street Journal, *Trump Roils NATO Allies With Calls to Double Military Spending, U.S. leader urges allies to double target to 4% while questioning the alliance's value and bashing Germany for its support of a Russia gas deal,* (https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-calls-for-allies-to-increase-defense-spending-at-start-of-nato-summit-1531297516) By Rebecca Ballhaus, Valentina Pop and Laurence Norman (11 July 2018)
- What does the US get out of NATO? ...The alliance allows the US to have a strong foothold in Europe, a presence that has traditionally helped it counter Russia's influence in the region. It also allows the US to launch military action in other regions, mainly the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. In Germany alone, the US has 152 military sites for its army and air force, US Defense Department data from 2017 shows. The US' largest military hospital abroad is in Germany, and it uses bases in the country as "lily pads" to go back and forth from countries like

Afghanistan. The US also has six nuclear stockpiles in five European NATO countries — Germany, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey — according to the Federation of American Scientists. It also stores tanks and artillery in Norwegian caves... many countries went to Iraq and Afghanistan and many, many soldiers were killed from all these countries, and it was not their war, it was an American war really, more than anything else.

  - CNN ***Is the US NATO's piggy bank? Here's what America gives and takes,*** *by Nic Robertson and Angela Dewan, CNN* (https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/11/europe/nato-trump-us-europe-explainer-intl/index.html) (12 July 2018)

- Throughout the day before the summit in Helsinki, the lead story on the New York Times home page stayed the same: "Just by Meeting With Trump, Putin Comes Out Ahead." (https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/15/world/europe/trump-putin-helsinki-summit.html) ... The Washington Post...editorialized that Russia's President Vladimir Putin is "an implacably hostile foreign adversary." ...Contempt for diplomacy with Russia is now extreme... A bellicose stance toward Russia has become so routine and widespread that we might not give it a second thought... **Often the biggest lies involve what remains unsaid. For instance, U.S. media rarely mention such key matters as the promise-breaking huge expansion of NATO to Russia's borders since the fall of the Berlin Wall... or the more than 800 U.S. military bases overseas -- in contrast to Russia's nine...** We need a major shift in the U.S. approach toward Russia...The lives -- and even existence -- of future generations are at stake in the relationship between Washington and Moscow... The incessant drumbeat is in sync with what Martin Luther King Jr. called "the madness of militarism.

  - Norman Solomon in ***...Hostile Propaganda: Contempt for diplomacy with Russia is now extreme,*** *Common Dreams* (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2018/07/16/climb-down-summit-hostile-propagandaClimb) (16 July 2018)

- The story goes back more than three decades to the fall of the Berlin Wall and eventual re-unification of Germany. At the time, the Soviet Union had some 380,000 troops in what was then the German Democratic Republic, or East Germany. Those forces were there as part of the treaty ending World War II, and the Soviets were concerned that removing them could end up threatening the USSR's borders. The Russians have been invaded — at terrible cost — three times in a little more than a century. So in the early 1990s, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev cut a deal. The Soviets agreed to withdraw troops from Eastern Europe as long as NATO didn't fill the vacuum, or recruit members of the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact. Baker promised Gorbachev that NATO would not move "one inch east." The agreement... was followed in practice. NATO stayed west of the Oder and Neisse rivers separating Germany and Poland, and Soviet troops returned to Russia... But President Bill Clinton blew that all up in 1999, when the U.S. and NATO intervened in the civil war between Serbs and Albanians over the Serbian province of Kosovo. Behind the new American doctrine of "responsibility to protect," NATO opened a massive 11-week bombing campaign against Serbia... From Moscow's point of view, the war was unnecessary. The Serbs were willing to withdraw their troops and restore Kosovo's autonomous status. But NATO demanded a large occupation force that would be immune from Serbian law, something the nationalist-minded Serbs would never agree to. It was virtually the same provocative language the Austrian-Hungarian Empire had presented to the Serbs in 1914, language that set off World War I... But NATO didn't stop there...

  - Conn Hallinan (https://fpif.org/authors/conn-hallinan/), in *It's Time for NATO to Go the Way of the Warsaw Pact, Foreign Policy In Focus* (https://fpif.org/its-time-for-nato-to-go-the-way-of-the-warsaw-pact/), (27 July 2018)

- While Moscow is depicted as an aggressive adversary, NATO surrounds Russia on three sides, has deployed anti-missile systems in Poland, Romania, Spain, Turkey, and the Black Sea, and has a 12 to 1 advantage in military spending. With opposing forces now toe-to-toe, it would not take much to set off a chain reaction that could end in a nuclear exchange. Yet instead of inviting a dialogue, the document boasts that the Alliance has "suspended all practical civilian and military cooperation between NATO and Russia."... The solution seems obvious. First, a return to the 1998 military deployment. While it is unlikely that former members of the Warsaw Pact would drop their NATO membership, a withdrawal of non-national troops from NATO members that border Russia would cool things off. Second, the removal of anti-missile systems that should never have been deployed in the first place. In turn, Russia could remove the middle-range Iskander missiles NATO is complaining about and agree to talks aimed at reducing nuclear stockpiles. But long range, it's finally time to re-think alliances. NATO was a child of the Cold War, when the West believed that the Soviets were a threat. But Russia today is not the Soviet Union, and there's no way Moscow would be stupid enough to attack a superior military force. The old ways of thinking are not only outdated, but also dangerous. It's time NATO went the way of the Warsaw Pact.
  - Conn Hallinan (https://fpif.org/authors/conn-hallinan/), in *It's Time for NATO to Go the Way of the Warsaw Pact, Foreign Policy In Focus* (https://fpif.org/its-time-for-nato-to-go-the-way-of-the-warsaw-pact/), (27 July 2018)

- [President Trump is]... perfectly right when he says we should have better relations with Russia. Being dragged through the mud for that is outlandish... Russia shouldn't refuse to deal with the United States because the U.S. carried out the worst crime of the century in the invasion of Iraq, much worse than anything Russia has done. But they shouldn't refuse to deal with us for that reason, and we shouldn't refuse to deal with them for whatever infractions they may have carried out, which certainly exist. This is just absurd.
  We have to move towards better—right at the Russian border, there are very extreme tensions, that could blow up anytime and lead to what would in fact be a terminal nuclear war, terminal for the species and life on Earth. We're very close to that...
  First of all, we should do things to ameliorate it. Secondly, we should ask why. Well, it's because NATO expanded after the collapse of the Soviet Union, in violation of verbal promises to Mikhail Gorbachev, mostly under Clinton, partly under first Bush, then Clinton expanded right to the Russian border, expanded further under Obama... The fate of... organized human society, even of the survival of the species, depends on this. How much attention is given to these things as compared with, you know, whether Trump lied about something?
  - Noam Chomsky, *Noam Chomsky on Mass Media Obsession with Russia & the Stories Not Being Covered in the Trump Era, Democracy Now* (https://www.democracynow.org/2018/7/27/noam_chomsky_on_mass_media_obsession) (27 July 2018)

- The crucial question...what is NATO for? ...From the beginning.. we had drilled into our heads that the purpose of NATO was to defend us from the Russian hordes... OK, 1991, no more Russian hordes. There were negotiations, between George Bush, the first; James Baker, secretary of state; Mikhail Gorbachev; Genscher and Kohl, the Germans, on how to deal... after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev... agreed to allow Germany, now unified, to join NATO... There was a quid pro quo, namely that... NATO means basically U.S. forces—not expand to East Berlin, to East Germany... the phrase that was used was "not one inch to the east."
  NATO immediately moved to East Germany. Under Clinton, other countries, former Russian satellites, were introduced into NATO. Finally, NATO went so far, as I mentioned before... to suggest that even Ukraine, right at the heartland of Russian strategic concerns...join NATO.

So, what's NATO doing altogether? Well, actually, its mission was changed. The official mission of NATO was changed to become to be—to control and safeguard the global energy system, sea lanes, pipelines and so on. And, of course, on the side, it's acting as a intervention force for the United States. **Is that a legitimate reason for us to maintain NATO, to be an instrument for U.S. global domination?** I think that's a rather serious question. That's not the question that's asked.

  - Noam Chomsky, *Noam Chomsky: U.S. Must Improve Relations with Russia and Challenge the Expansion of NATO, DemocracyNow,* (https://www.democracynow.org/2018/7/30/noam_chomsky_us_must_improve_relations) (30 July 2018)

- As we watch the media today, we are spoon fed more and more propaganda and fear of the unknown, that we should be afraid of the unknown and have full faith that our government is keeping us safe from the unknown. **But by looking at media today, those of us who are old enough will be reminded of the era of Cold War news articles, hysteria of how the Russians would invade and how we should duck and cover under tables in our kitchens for the ensuing nuclear war.** Under this mass hysteria all Western governments were convinced that we should join Western allies to fight the unknown evil that lies to the east. Later through my travels in Russia during the height of the Cold War with a peace delegation, we were shocked by the poverty of the country, and questioned how we ever were led to believe that Russia was a force to be afraid of. We talked to the Russian students who were dismayed by their absolute poverty and showed anger against NATO for leading their country into an arms race that they could not win. Many years later, when speaking to young Americans in the US, I was in disbelief about the fear the students had of Russia and their talk of invasion. This is a good example of how the unknown can cause a deep rooted paranoia when manipulated by the right powers.

  - Mairead Maguire in *Demonization of Russia in a New Cold War Era, Inventing a foe to sell military ambitions is still the most dangerous of games, Common Dreams* (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2018/09/14/demonization-russia-new-cold-war-era) (14 September 2018)

- Firstly, I must say, that I personally believe that Russia is not by any means without faults. But the amount of anti-Russian propaganda in our media today is a throwback to the Cold War era. We must ask the question: Is this leading to more arms, a bigger NATO? Possibly to challenge large powers in the Middle East and Asia, as we see the US approaching the South China seas, and NATO Naval games taking place in the Black Sea. Missile compounds are being erected in Romania, Poland and other ex-Soviet countries, while military games are set up in Scandinavia close to the Russian border to practice for a cold climate war scenario. At the same time, we see the US President arriving in Europe asking for increased military spending. At the same time the USA has increased its budget by 300 billion in one year.
  The demonization of Russia is, I believe, one of the most dangerous things that is happening in our world today. The scapegoating of Russia is an inexcusable game that the West is indulging in. It is time for political leaders and each individual to move us back from the brink of catastrophe to begin to build relationships with our Russian brothers and sisters. Too long has the elite financially gained from war while millions are moved into poverty and desperation.

  - Mairead Maguire in *Demonization of Russia in a New Cold War Era, Inventing a foe to sell military ambitions is still the most dangerous of games, Common Dreams* (https://www.commondreams.org/views/2018/09/14/demonization-russia-new-cold-war-era) (14 September 2018)

- President Trump says he knows more about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization than Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis. "Frankly, I like Gen. Mattis. I think I know more about it than he does," Trump said during an interview with CBS News' "60 Minutes" that aired Sunday. "And I know more about it from the standpoint of fairness, that I can tell you." Trump made the comments when asked whether Mattis, a former four-star Marine general, explained to the commander in chief that NATO was crucial to preventing World War III. "The answer is this," Trump said. "I will always be there with NATO, but they have to pay their way. I'm fully in favor of NATO, but I don't wanna be taken advantage of." Trump has repeatedly bashed the country's NATO partners for their slow progress in achieving the alliance's defense spending target of 2 percent of GDP by 2024.
  - Naomi Lim https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/trump-i-know-more-about-nato-than-defense-secretary-jim-mattis *Trump: 'I know more' about NATO than Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, Washington Examiner,* (14 October 2018)

2019

January/February

In the 1980s, the United States developed the M270 MLRS, the most common rocket artillery system in NATO. It is fielded by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and Turkey. It shoots 227mm rockets, twelve of which are held in two six-rocket pods... ~The National Interest

- Designed to pump out a high volume of fire within a short period, rocket artillery systems are particularly dangerous in their ability to obliterate a position before units have a chance to take cover. This is the best of what NATO has to offer. In the 1980s, the United States developed the M270 MLRS, the most common rocket artillery system in NATO. It is fielded by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and Turkey. It shoots 227mm rockets, twelve of which are held in two six-rocket pods...
  - ***The Big Guns: NATO's 5 Deadliest Rocket Artillery Systems,*** *The National Interest,* Charlie Gao (https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/big-guns-natos-5-deadliest-rocket-artillery-systems-40717) (6 January 2019)
- Non-US members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will invest a further $100bn in defence spending, according to secretary general Jens Stoltenberg. A NATO official told Army Technology: “At the Wales Summit in 2014, all NATO allies agreed to stop cutting defence budgets, increase defence expenditures as GDP grows, and aim to move towards spending 2% of their GDP on defence within a decade. “In the last years, allies have made steady progress and from 2016, European allies and Canada have spent an extra $41bn on defence in real terms. Last week in Davos, the NATO Secretary General announced that European allies and Canada ’will add $100bn by the end of next year‘. This figure is based on allies’ annual national plans on defence.
  - ***NATO to increase defence spending by $100bn amid US criticism, Army Technology***, Talal Husseini, (https://www.army-technology.com/news/nato-defence-spending-100bn/) (28 January 2019)
- On Feb. 6, Macedonia signed an accession agreement with NATO, paving its way to join the

alliance next year. The country will be renamed "North Macedonia" to appease the Greeks. Despite predictable cheers from the U.S. media and foreign policy elites, the addition of another tiny Balkan country to NATO only highlights a clear reality: NATO is making itself irrelevant by becoming an alliance that can't fight...
Germany, once NATO's front line against the Soviets, is the most glaring example. Over the last 25 years, the Germans have chosen to become militarily impotent. On average, just 39 of Germany's 128 Eurofighter Typhoons, the Luftwaffe's best fighter plane, were available for service in 2017. Barely a quarter of its older Tornados are serviceable. Maybe this horrible maintenance record is a secondary concern, though: Der Spiegel reported that Germany only had enough missiles for four of the Typhoons to engage in combat... The German military is currently short a staggering 21,000 officers and noncommissioned officers. Even Germany's elite KSK special operations troops have earned more of a reputation for their beer than their battles.

- *Macedonia is set to join NATO — an alliance that can't fight, Defense News,* (https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/02/13/macedonia-is-set-to-join-nato-an-alliance-that-cant-fight/) February 13, 2019

Non-US members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will invest a further $100bn according to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. ~Army Technology

...Russia is not by any means without faults. But the amount of anti-Russian propaganda in our media today is a throwback to the Cold War era. We must ask the question: Is this leading to more arms, a bigger NATO? ...The demonization of Russia is, I believe, one of the most dangerous things that is happening in our world today... Too long has the elite financially gained from war while millions are moved into poverty and desperation. ~Mairead Maguire

March/April

- President Trump's nationalistic foreign policy has rattled U.S. allies and NATO members — and as he has pushed them to pay more for having U.S. troops stationed on their territory and framed the alliance in transactional terms. In particular, Trump has told his aides in recent weeks that he has devised an eye-popping new formula for U.S. allies, including NATO countries, although he has not implemented it. Under his proposal, countries would pay the full cost of stationing American troops on their territory, plus 50 percent, according to U.S. and foreign officials familiar with the idea, which could have allies contributing five times what they now provide. Trump calls the formula "cost plus 50," and it has struck fear in the hearts of U.S. allies who view it as extortionate.
Republicans such as Rep. Liz Cheney (Wyo.), a member of party leadership, have criticized the suggestion. "It would be absolutely devastating," Cheney said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press."
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has told U.S. allies that NATO has bipartisan support.
  - Washington Post *As Europe worries about Trump, congressional leaders invite NATO head for joint address,* Seung Min Kim, Rachael Bade and Robert Costa (11 March 2019)
- The transatlantic alliance deserves a resounding "happy birthday". It kept the peace for 40

years of cold war, protected western Europe from communism, helped stabilise central Europe after the Soviet Union's collapse and enabled unprecedented prosperity. "We're incredibly complacent about the continuous delivery of peace and stability in our lives, and a hell of a lot of that depends on nato," says Sir Adam Thomson, a former British ambassador to nato, now with the European Leadership Network, a London-based think-tank. "We tend to take it for granted."
In many respects the alliance looks stronger than ever. It will soon have 30 members, encompassing more than 930m people. Together they produce around half the world's gdp and account for about 55% of global defence spending. The allies are getting on with a long to-do list drawn up at last year's summit, from ambitious readiness plans to new command centres.

- ***What NATO needs to do to live to its 100th birthday, The Economist*** (https://www.economist.com/special-report/2019/03/14/what-nato-needs-to-do-to-live-to-its-100th-birthday) (14 March 2019)

Poland has formally requested Lockheed Martin (LMT) F-35 fifth-generation fighters...as Warsaw launches a $49 billion modernization effort... NATO allies are bullish on the fifth-generation jet... Japan is the largest international buyer of the stealth jet, amid rising regional tensions with China. Earlier this year Germany decided against buying the F-35... and will instead look at older fourth-generation jets. ~ Investor's Business Daily

- NATO has confirmed that it plans to establish a storage facility in Poland for U.S. military equipment, including armored vehicles, ammunition, and weapons to arm a full brigade. A NATO official on March 23 told AFP that a report earlier by The Wall Street Journal that said the $260 million facility would be located in Powidz, some 200 kilometers west of Warsaw, was accurate. The WSJ quoted NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg as saying work on the site will begin this summer and take two years to complete. Since Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014, Poland, the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia as well as other Eastern European states have expressed concerns about their security. The United States has deployed and rotated troops in the region since the Ukraine crisis began in an effort to deter Russia. NATO has also increased its presence near Russia's borders. Stoltenberg told the WSJ that the storage facility would help "underpin the increased U.S. presence in Poland."

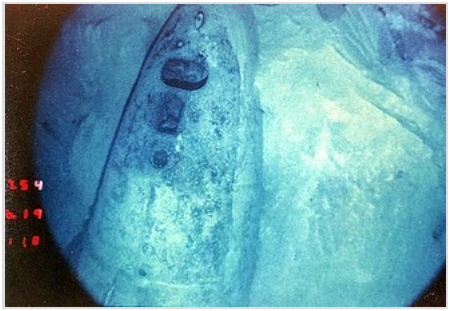
After Republican Sen. John McCain's death in August, three former NATO secretaries proposed naming the military alliance's new headquarters in Brussels after him ~WashingtonPost

  - *NATO Confirms Plans For $260 Million U.S. Storage Site In Poland, Radio Free Europe,* (https://www.rferl.org/a/nato-confirms-plans-for-260-million-u-s-storage-site-in-poland/29839005.html) (14 March 2019)

- NATO turns 70 in 2019 and will celebrate its anniversary on 4th April 2019 in Washington DC... NATO is obsolete, it belongs in the dustbin of history! NATO claims to strive for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. But, NATO has never been such a system. It is the largest military alliance in the world with the largest military spending and nuclear stockpiles. It is both the main driver for a new arms race and the main obstacle to a nuclear weapons-free world. Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been transformed into a

global alliance structured to wage “out of area” wars in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as to “contain” China. Having military troops at the Russian border, new nuclear weapons and a missile defence shield, it is a key driver for confrontation with Russia and a perpetrator of the corrosive “enemy” narrative.

  - *Call for Actions on NATO Summit 2019, No to War — No to NATO, World Beyond War* (https://worldbeyondwar.org/call-for-actions-on-nato-summit-2019/) (15 March 2019)



By 1968 it was obvious... that the submarine was badly in need of major overhaul. Yet the demands of the Cold War made it necessary to send Scorpion and her officers and crew on one more deployment... in joint NATO operations. ~The National Interest
(image: USS_Scorpion on ocean floor with two nuclear Mark 45 anti-submarine torpedoes. U.S. Navy photo)

- NATO claims to seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. But, NATO’s heads of states agreed that military spending should amount to 2% of national GPDs. Their unchallenged military spending – NATO members already spend almost 1 trillion US dollars per year – will be increased by billions of US dollars. This should instead be spent on the well-being of the people in the North Atlantic area and beyond. Raising living standards and improving people’s lives must be prioritized over weapons and war which create instability and exacerbate social injustice, deprivation and environmental destruction.
- NATO’s claims are dishonest. It is an unjust, undemocratic, violent and aggressive alliance trying to shape the world for the benefit of a few. On 3rd April 1968, one day before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. stated that “It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence in this world; it’s nonviolence or nonexistence. That is where we are today.” NATO’s choice is violence. 41 years later we state loud and clear: “it’s the dissolution of NATO or nonexistence. That is where we are today!”

  - *Call for Actions on NATO Summit 2019, No to War — No to NATO, World Beyond War* (https://worldbeyondwar.org/call-for-actions-on-nato-summit-2019/) (15 March 2019)

I think you’ll see the end of NATO and a whole range of other things that really are the things that maintain peace. ~Joe Biden

- While nostalgic for the past, post-Cold War NATO is a shell of its former self... **NATO mimics a dysfunctional club where the U.S. operates as funder, provider, and gatekeeper.**.. In a world without a Soviet juggernaut to contend with, NATO is an organization trying to keep itself in business. As Barry Posen, a professor of political science at MIT, wrote in a New York Times op-ed, (https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/10/opinion/trump-aside-whats-the-us-role-in-nato.html) "NATO’s founding mission has been achieved and replaced with unsuccessful misadventures.” Some of those misadventures, such as the 2011 regime-change campaign in Libya, have created even more security problems, from the proliferation of terrorist networks in North Africa to an ongoing refugee crisis... Washington should no longer be expected to pick up the tab.

  - Daniel DePetris (https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/author/daniel-depetris)] in *Let's not fool ourselves: America's NATO allies are sandbagging Uncle Sam, Washington Examiner*

(https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/lets-not-fool-ourselves-americas-nato-allies-are-sandbagging-uncle-sam) (19 March 2019)

- Poland has been lobbying hard for a greater US military presence in the country ... as part of NATO operations, with the suggestion that a permanent base be created – for which Poland has offered to pay – dubbed "Fort Trump", doubtless as a way of appealing to the current US president's ego.
  - *New NATO storage facility in Poland: first steps towards US base? Poland Daily* (https://polanddaily.com/261-new-nato-storage-facility-in-poland-first-steps-towards-us-base) (25 March 2019)

By 2020 I think we'll have at least another hundred billion dollars spent by the Allies, the other countries... ~ President Donald Trump

A Lockheed Martin F-16 Fighting Falcon takes off from Balad Air Base, Iraq.

Russia is right: The West promised not to enlarge NATO, and these promises were broken. ~ Tarik Cyril Amar

- Up until now, the United States has been the key architect and master builder of the institutions undergirding the Atlantic Community. But American power has its limits, especially when it comes to dealing with the only other nuclear superpower on the planet. Russia, in its Soviet and post-Soviet incarnations, has catalyzed all three phases of NATO's existence... Joseph Stalin started the Cold War before the guns of World War II were silent. The Central European nations that the Red Army "liberated" from Nazi occupation were quickly sucked into the sphere of Soviet domination and tyranny.
  The Wise Men in the Truman administration were determined to contain Soviet expansion...The strategy rested on a bargain with the Western Europeans. Those war-torn nations had to forsake their countries' two-century habit of bloody rivalries and forge a community of nations bound together by democracy, commerce, and cooperation. In exchange, the United States would anchor a trans-Atlantic alliance that would protect the Europeans' freedom and their project in integration.
  When Bill Clinton became president, he had to grapple with the question of NATO's future. Some experts and veterans of the Cold War thought that NATO, having accomplished its mission, should go into honorary retirement. That idea went nowhere in the government.
  But Clinton was convinced that NATO had to take on a new role, one with new, auxiliary institutions that would include all former Warsaw Pact members and all 15 of the former Soviet republics. The lead innovation was the Partnership for Peace (PfP), created in 1994 to foster trust and cooperation across what had been the Iron Curtain.
  NATO's creators hoped the Alliance would never have to go to war. For 40 years, that was the case. When, in the 1990s, NATO did go into combat, the enemy wasn't Russia. Moreover, that catastrophic war finally came to an end in large measure because of Russian diplomacy.
  - Strobe Talbott in *A brief history of NATO, from Truman to Trump* (https://www.brookings.ed

u/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/03/27/a-brief-history-of-nato-from-truman-to-trump/), *Brookings Institution* (27 March 2019)

- The promises given to President Mikhail Gorbachev by President George H. W. Bush, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, President Francois Mitterand, Chancellor Helmuth Kohl and their foreign ministers in 1990—not to expand NATO eastward; not to extend membership in the NATO alliance to former member states of the Warsaw Pact—were ignored... In the 1990s, the Russian threat was nonexistent and there was no reason to suppose it would return. In addition, President Clinton and the Senators who were nominally in charge of overseeing the conduct of U.S. Foreign and Security Policy were mesmerized by the prospects of being on the right side of history and campaign donations. Given the voracious appetite for cash in Congress the defense industriess were clearly interested in NATO expansion and found ways to advocate for it. Weapons sales to East European nations invited to join NATO promised huge profits. Bruce Jackson, a Lockheed vice president from 1993–2002, rushed to set up the Committee to Expand NATO and reportedly used contributions from defense companies to lobby Congress for NATO expansion.

Douglas Macgregor in *NATO Is Not Dying. It's a Zombie* (https://nationalinterest.org/feature/nato-not-dying-it%E2%80%99s-zombie-49747), *The National Interest*, (31 March 2019)

- When Nancy Pelosi and Mitch McConnell teamed up to invite NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to address a joint session of Congress, they had every reason to expect the April 3 speech to be a big hit with U.S. media and political elites. The establishment is eager to affirm the sanctity of support for the transatlantic military alliance. Huge reverence for NATO is matched by how dangerous NATO has become. NATO's continual expansion -- all the way to Russia's borders -- has significantly increased the chances that the world's two nuclear superpowers will get into direct military conflict. But in the United States, when anyone challenges the continued expansion of NATO, innuendos or outright smears are likely. McCain conveyed the common madness of reverence for NATO -- and the common intolerance for anything that might approach a rational debate on whether it's a good idea to keep expanding an American-led military alliance to, in effect, push Russia into a corner. Doing so is understandably viewed from Russia as a dire threat... Ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall -- and the quickly broken promises by the U.S. government in 1990 that NATO would move "not one inch eastward" -- NATO has been closing in on Russia's borders while bringing one nation after another into full military membership. During the last three decades, NATO has added 13 countries -- and it's not done yet.
  - Norman Solomon in *Pelosi and McConnell: Cranking Up Bipartisan Madness for NATO, Consortium News* (https://consortiumnews.com/2019/03/31/pelosi-and-mcconnell-crank-up-nato-madness/) (31 March 2019)
- The 1990s saw an effort to expand both NATO's mission ("out of area or out of business" became the mantra of the day) and NATO's membership. *Despite the well-documented promises made to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev by Secretary of State James Baker (and many others) that the West would not try to expand NATO "one inch eastward," the Clinton administration embarked on a dual strategy that expanded the alliance eastward and transformed the defensive alliance into what became a staging ground for US interventions in the Balkans, Africa, and the Greater Middle East. One of NATO's first major post–Cold War missions, the 78-day airial bombing of Serbia, nearly ended in disaster when NATO Supreme Allied Commander Wesley Clark ordered British General Mike Jackson, commander of NATO's troops in Kosovo, to retake the airfield in Pristina, the capital, from the Russians—by force if necessary. Jackson refused: "I'm not going to start Third World War for you." Undeterred by

that apocalyptic near-miss, NATO has soldiered on, playing supporting roles in the Bush and Obama administrations' wars of choice.

  - James Carden (https://www.thenation.com/authors/james-carden/) *NATO Turns 70 Next week, Washington will throw the military alliance a birthday party. How much is there to celebrate?, The Nation* (https://www.thenation.com/article/nato-turns-70/) (28 March 2019)

- The policy of NATO expansion is largely responsible for the dangerous deterioration in relations between Russia and the West and lies at the heart of the ongoing Ukraine crisis. Still more, says Nation contributing editor Stephen F. Cohen, a result of "the new Cold War and its rampant Russophobia …has been the near-end of American diplomacy toward Russia and the almost total militarization of US-Russian relations. This alone is a profound source of insecurity-including the possibility of war with Russia." The end of the Cold War left NATO purposeless; expansion has made it untenable. ...NATO should address what has gone so wrong over the past three decades by reexamining, its policies of eastward expansion and non-defensive deployment and seriously consider adopting a nuclear "no first use" policy.
  - James Carden (https://www.thenation.com/authors/james-carden/) in *NATO Turns 70 Next week, Washington will throw the military alliance a birthday party. How much is there to celebrate?, The Nation* (https://www.thenation.com/article/nato-turns-70/) (28 March 2019)

- Lockheed Martin has been awarded a $1.14 billion contract for Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems for Poland, Bahrain and Romania. The foreign military sales contract, announced Wednesday by the Department of Defense, covers full rate production for the GMLRS surface-to-surface systems for the three nations. Work on the contract is expected to run through Aug. 31, 2021, and will be performed in Grand Prairie, Texas. Lockheed Martin... has produced more than 25,000 GMLRS through 2016 for the United States and NATO allies.
  - UPI *Lockheed awarded $1.1B for rocket sales to Poland, Bahrain, Romania, UPI* (https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2019/03/28/Lockheed-awarded-11B-for-rocket-sales-to-Poland-Bahrain-Romania/5801553774933/) (28 March 2019)

- While many Democratic politicians and U.S. media outlets have portrayed Trump as soft on Russia and uncommitted to Western militarism, such claims don't hold up to facts. Trump and his top deputies have repeatedly affirmed a commitment to NATO, while his overall policies (if not always his rhetoric) have been dangerously bellicose toward Russia. When NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg gives his speech to the assembled members of Congress next Wednesday, you can count on the House Speaker and Senate Majority Leader to be right behind him. **The bipartisan enthusiasm will be obvious -- in tribute to a militarized political culture that is vastly profitable for a few, while vastly destructive in countless ways**. Only public education, activism, protests and a wide range of political organizing have the potential to disrupt and end the reflexive support for NATO in Washington.
  - Norman Solomon in *Pelosi and McConnell: Cranking Up Bipartisan Madness for NATO, Consortium News* (https://consortiumnews.com/2019/03/31/pelosi-and-mcconnell-crank-up-nato-madness/) (31 March 2019)

- Russia follows a pretty standard script when reacting to the U.S. and NATO as a whole, and though it has been slower to react to murmurs of Fort Trump than, say, Washington's withdrawal from the INF Treaty, Moscow has begun to strike similar notes. Take, for instance, one op-ed run by the state-owned RIA Novosti news agency: "With Suicidal Pleasure: Poland to Make Itself into a Battlefield." Low-level officials have echoed this sentiment, but the Kremlin has been quiet. As with the Russian reaction to the downfall of the INF treaty, senior leadership

is likely to stay out of the fray until there is a concrete development to react to. And even then, Moscow's counter-moves are unlikely to be any more specific than Putin's position on INF and possible U.S. missile deployments in Eastern Europe: "We have to ensure our security," he said in December. Fort Trump would certainly give the Russian government a perceived justification to deploy more troops and equipment in its Western Military District, and bolster support for the Kremlin's military spending at home.

- *As NATO banks on Poland, is the country becoming the new face of a nervous Europe?, Defense News,* Sebastian Sprenger and Matthew Bodner (https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2019/04/08/as-nato-banks-on-poland-is-the-country-becoming-the-new-face-of-a-nervous-europe/) (7 April 2019)

- President Donald Trump: By 2020 I think we'll have at least another hundred billion dollars spent by the Allies, the other countries, the 27 countries outside of ourselves...
  - *What is NATO Good For?, The Real News Network,* (https://therealnews.com/stories/what-is-nato-good-for) (8 April 2019)

- And then there is NATO. Again Bolton's directness—and good sense—in past statements have proved awkward in dealing with current political realities. In July 2016, on a Breitbart News radio program, Bolton denounced then-nominee Trump's suggestion that the U.S. not defend fellow NATO countries. (NATO is one international accord Bolton considers worthwhile.) He called Trump's statement "very disturbing" and "a dagger at the heart of the most successful political-military alliance in human history."
  - *Will John Bolton Bring on Armageddon—Or Stave It Off? The Atlantic,* Graeme Wood, (https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/04/john-bolton-trump-national-security-adviser/583246/) (April 2019)

- In January 2018, the experts at the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the hands of the Doomsday Clock to two minutes before midnight, where it had stood during the darkest days of the Cold War, from 1953 to 1960. The latest move of the hands was precipitated by the recklessness in Trump's nuclear thinking and the deepening crisis over Korea. Trump wondered aloud about the point of having nuclear weapons if he couldn't use them. His answer was to make them more usable, which he did with his new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), the first since Obama's 2010 NPR, which had reduced the role of nuclear weapons in the US defense posture. The 2018 NPR significantly elevated their role, permitting use in response to vaguely defined "extreme circumstances," such as cyberattacks or attacks on the infrastructure of both the United States and its "allies and partners." The review doubled down on Obama's unconscionable 30-year trillion-dollar modernization of all parts of the nuclear arsenal. The actual cost looks to be closer to $1.7 trillion and climbing. To make matters worse, all eight other nuclear powers are undertaking their own modernizations, though on a far more modest scale. Russia, it should be noted, actually cut its defense spending this past year.
  - *2 Minutes and Counting, Crises that seemed contained not long ago have now spiraled out of control—and the prospects for resolving them peacefully look depressingly bleak, the Nation,* (https://www.thenation.com/article/untold-history-of-the-united-states-rerelease/) Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick, (3 April 2019)

- Acting like a hegemon, the United States, starting in 1999, took advantage of Russian weakness and broke its promise not to expand NATO, eventually adding 13 countries, the last of which was Montenegro, in 2017. When Bush announced plans to incorporate Georgia and Ukraine, Putin drew the line. Following the US-backed Ukrainian coup, he took back Crimea

and made clear that there are limits to his toleration of NATO expansion.
In his March 1, 2018, Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly, he went further, throwing down the gauntlet to the United States. Russia, he acknowledged, had been on the defensive since the Soviet Union collapsed, having lost substantial amounts of its territory, population, GDP, industrial potential, and military capability. It depended on the IMF and World Bank for survival. The United States ignored its appeals not to abrogate the ABM Treaty in 2002 and expanded its global missile-defense system, leaving Russia vulnerable to a US attack. A 2006 article in Foreign Affairs contending that neither Russia or China could even retaliate against a US first strike "sent heads spinning" in Russia, The Washington Post reported, "with visions of Dr. Strangelove."

  - ***2 Minutes and Counting, Crises that seemed contained not long ago have now spiraled out of control—and the prospects for resolving them peacefully look depressingly bleak**, the Nation,* (https://www.thenation.com/article/untold-history-of-the-united-states-rerelease/) Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick, (3 April 2019)

- But now, in March 2018, Putin was declaring that the US effort had failed. He unveiled the existence of five new nuclear weapons, all of which could circumvent US missile-defense systems. He concluded defiantly, "I hope everything that has been said today will sober any potential aggressor," adding, "No one listened to us. Listen to us now." Independent Russian military analyst Aleksandr Golts said that all the weapons experts he had spoken to were "in shock, as was I."

  - *2 Minutes and Counting, Crises that seemed contained not long ago have now spiraled out of control—and the prospects for resolving them peacefully look depressingly bleak, the Nation,* (https://www.thenation.com/article/untold-history-of-the-united-states-rerelease/) Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick, (3 April 2019)

- In her 29-year career in the Army and Army Reserves, Colonel Ann Wright served at the NATO subcommand Allied Forces Central Europe, and later as a diplomat in various posts around the world, but resigned from the U.S. government in protest of George W. Bush's war on Iraq. She agrees... that NATO is an impediment to peace in Europe.
Ann Wright: I think it's the military industrial complex that needs more weapons sales, and the Russians have always been the bogeyman for the United States from the Cold War period. And even though we had 20 years of peace and tranquility with the Russians, now they are being vilified again. Not to say that it's–you know, there are some things they've done I don't care for at all. But the fact that now they are the enemy, and the increase in the number of weapons all the countries are manufacturing and selling, is big business.

  - RealNews Network *What is NATO Good For?, The Real News Network,* (https://therealnews.com/stories/what-is-nato-good-for) (8 April 2019)

- Trump's attacks on NATO have been for his own political reasons, that he wants to show his base in the United States that he's going to stand up to the Europeans, he's going to stand up to other nations, he's going to stand up for Americans. He makes a big deal of making sure other people pay for what, you know, they need, and that the United States is not going to support them. But I think it's all show. I think in the White House, in the Oval Office, when the generals and admirals and the weapons systems CEOs are present, that President Trump's attitude is much different. He wants to make sure the United States and NATO are as powerful as possible.
NATO is extremely dangerous, as well, too, because of potential conflict with Russia. As we've expanded up to the Russian border, as we have based our troops around the Russian border,

conducted exercises, the Russians have reacted as you would expect a nation to react. And so we are on the brink of war. And this is not the way it should have been, as it was promised with the end of the Cold War.
NATO conducts military operations around the world, now, to include wars that include mass killing and suffering in places like Libya and Afghanistan, and not doing well, not doing well for the world. Not where you can point and say, look, we resolved this conflict, but rather these conflicts are open-ended with the suffering continual.

  - *What is NATO Good For?, The Real News Network,* (https://therealnews.com/stories/what-is-nato-good-for) (8 April 2019)

- The celebration of NATO's 70 years of existence provides another opportunity to unearth the real history of the ideas, practices and destruction wrought by this military alliance. Even with the clear exposure of the cooperation between NATO, the CIA and the British MI6 to spread terror and psychological warfare in Europe immediately after the formation of this military alliance, the mainstream media, academics and policy makers remain silent on activities of the 'stay behind armies' and 'false flag' operations that distorted the real causes of insecurity in the world after 1945. The evidence of the manipulations of the peoples of the world to ensure the continued survival of NATO has been well documented in the fraudulent interventions and bombings in the Balkans right up the present multiple wars against the peoples of Iran...
The ostensive reason for the founding of NATO was to 'thwart' Soviet aggression, but in practice the organization was a prop for western capital and after the fall of the Berlin Wall, became the core prop for Wall Street. In this year, there will be many commentaries on the fact that the existence of NATO reflects a Cold War relic, that NATO is obsolete and lost its mandate, but very few will link the expansion of NATO to the military management of the international system. Prior to 1991, the planners of NATO could justify the existence of NATO on ideological and political grounds, but with the threat of a multi polar world and the diminution of the dollar, NATO expanded to the point where this author joined with others in labelling this organization Global NATO to reflect its current imperial mandate.

  - Horace G. Campbell *Global NATO: A 70-Year Alliance of Oppressors in Crisis, CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/04/09/global-nato-a-70-year-alliance-of-oppressors-in-crisis/), (9 April 2019)

- In the final analysis we must go back to the Middle East where an alliance between women in Bahrain, Israel, Yemen, Iran and Saudi Arabia holds promise for a new platform. The women of Egypt gave us that notice when they mobilized to come out in forces across religious and class lines. These women are opposed to fundamentalist who want women to cover up but will disrobe them and beat them if they fight for their rights. This new mobilization of progressive women can now be seen in the politics of the USA where a new generation is maturing with new skills to fully mobilize against the NATO and the Pentagon. What remains to be seen is whether these forces will oppose the massive expenditures of the Pentagon and return to the call of Seymour Melman for demilitarization and the conversion of the military, financial, information complex.
While the energies of many are focused on the issues of electoral politics, progressives must remain alert to new false flag operations of NATO. We are in a revolutionary moment and revolutionaries cannot be pessimistic. There are three important tasks: dismantle NATO, fight imperialism, racism, and white supremacy globally and be at the forefront for social justice and solidarity in all parts of the world.

  - Horace G. Campbell *Global NATO: A 70-Year Alliance of Oppressors in Crisis, CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/04/09/global-nato-a-70-year-alliance-of-

oppressors-in-crisis/), (9 April 2019)

- There has always been an element in U.S. politics that questioned American internationalism in general and the U.S. role in European defense in particular. Those views gained new traction after the collapse of the Soviet Union. NATO's future role and its relevance was hotly debated during the Clinton administration.
  Ultimately, Washington pushed to expand the organization eastward, offering membership to the newly independent, former satellite states of the Soviet bloc. In doing so, it fundamentally transformed the organization, in Russian eyes, from a purely defensive one to a more aggressive one, infringing on a region that Moscow had long believed was critical to its own security and obligating itself to the defense and independence of countries that historically had often, albeit unwillingly, accommodated Russian interests.
  In expanding eastward, NATO accepted new obligations that were not central to its own security at a time when the Russian domination of Western Europe was no longer a viable threat while, at the same time, ensuring that its new commitments would be a source of perpetual conflict with Russia.
  - Joseph V. Micallef (https://www.military.com/author/joseph-v-micallef) in *NATO on Its 70th Anniversary: A Birthday Party or a Wake? Military.com,* (https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/04/22/nato-its-70th-anniversary-birthday-party-or-wake.html) (22 Apr 2019)

- The world is arming itself to the teeth. That is the conclusion of a new report published on April 29th by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), a think-tank. Global military spending last year rose to $1.8trn, says SIPRI—the highest level in real terms since reliable records began in 1988, during the cold war, and 76% higher than in 1998, when the world was enjoying its “peace dividend”.
  - *Military spending around the world is booming, The Economist,* (https://www.economist.com/international/2019/04/28/military-spending-around-the-world-is-booming)] (28 April 2019)

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- Ideological rivalry has been replaced by media ballyhoo. Even though NATO's doctrinal documents have recently introduced the notion of Russia as a civilizational threat, for the Russian civilization allegedly is based on qualitatively different principles than the Western civilization. In reality, however, these claims hide a conceptual distinction between Russia and the West's approaches to the security vs. freedom dilemma. Russia insists that people are imperfect and peace is fragile and that it should be maintained by any means necessary, including by putting on hold differences and, if need be, keeping authoritarian rulers in power. The West proceeds from the premise that... it is possible to violate peace, overthrow regimes and maybe even go to war for the sake of a people's liberation. Each of these intellectual traditions is rooted in the strategic experience of Russia and the West, respectively, and each of the two insists that the truth is on his side.
  The Phony Cold War was likely inevitable, and the beginning was only postponed by the mutual illusions on both sides with regard to each other in the 1990s. Many observers in Russia believe that the 1997 Russia-NATO Founding Act was a mistake and the Russia-NATO Council established in 2002 never worked as a conflict settlement arrangement. Rather, it was meant to symbolize an upcoming unity between Russia and NATO, something that never materialized.
  - Andrey Sushentsov (https://carnegieendowment.org/experts/1036) in ***A Phony Cold War,***

Valdai Club, (http://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/a-phony-cold-war/) (12 May 2019)

- Pentagon and State Department officials have told the European Union they're "deeply concerned" over plans to potentially exclude US defense firms from competing for billions worth of new arms deals, suggesting the US could slap restrictions on buying European defense equipment in retaliation. At issue is the proposed $14 billion European Defence Fund, and a host of procurement programs under the the Permanent Structured Cooperation, or PESCO, the European economic alliance is undertaking.
  - ***State, DoD Letter Warns European Union to Open Defense Contracts, Or Else,*** (https://breakingdefense.com/2019/05/state-dod-letter-warns-european-union-to-open-defense-contracts-or-else/) (17 May 2019)
- The Bundeswehr has repeatedly called for more financial resources... Those calls have been supported by pressure from NATO allies, particularly the US, to meet the alliance's defense budget target of 2% of GDP. The 2019 German defense budget is €43.2 billion, some €5 billion more than last year, and Merkel did not miss the opportunity on Monday to underline the "significant increase" in military funding.
  - *Angela Merkel inspects NATO troops in Germany DW,* (https://www.dw.com/en/angela-merkel-inspects-nato-troops-in-germany/a-48807788) Ben Knight (20 May 2019)
- NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has praised the United Kingdom for maintaining a continuous at-sea nuclear deterrent for 50 years in a letter to Prime Minister Theresa May. At least one Royal Navy submarine carrying nuclear missiles has been on undersea patrol at all times since April 1969. This mission, called Operation Relentless, is the longest sustained military operation ever undertaken by the UK. Mr. Stoltenberg stressed that NATO Allies face a highly complex international security environment. "Our goal is to maintain peace and security for all our nations and people", he wrote. "The commitment the UK has made, and continues to make, is a vital contribution to NATO's overall deterrence effort, including against the most extreme potential threats. This helps protect all NATO Allies."
  - NATO News *NATO Secretary General marks 50 years of UK submarine nuclear deterrent* (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_166172.htm) (21 May 2019)
- Former vice president Joe Biden... warned during a private Coral Gables fundraiser that the greatest threat to the future of America — world peace, even — is currently occupying the White House. Trump's first term will "go down as an aberration, an anomaly. But eight years will fundamentally change the nature of who we are," Biden told a crowd of about 200 who donated to Biden's campaign to see him speak at the Gables Club, 10 Edgewater Dr., along the Coral Gables Waterway. "The rest of the world is wondering what's going on," he said. "Eight years of this and I think we'll have a phenomenal dislocation occur around the world. I think you'll see the end of NATO and a whole range of other things that really are the things that maintain peace."
  - *Joe Biden in Florida: Another four years of Trump will 'end NATO', Miami Herald,* (https://www.tampabay.com/florida-politics/buzz/2019/05/22/joe-biden-in-florida-another-four-years-of-trump-will-end-nato/) (22 May 2019)
- Turkey doesn't understand that, for the United States, buying a sophisticated Russian air defense system is a major national security issue that can't be papered over. But Americans don't understand that all their tough talk about leveling sanctions against Turkey if the Russian arms sale goes through only plays into Turkish leaders' hands politically...

Speaking at a forum on Ankara-Washington relations hosted by the Hudson Institute in Washington, Hudson fellow Blaise Misztal said that, to President Tayyip Erdogan and his political coalition partners, “sanctions and kicking you out of 'NATO is a winning policy” because it fuels long-standing and growing anti-Americanism in their nationalist-leaning array of parties. Since 2014, and particularly after a failed coup attempt in 2016 that many Turks believe was known in Washington before it was launched, Erdogan “is becoming closer to [Vladimir] Putin, [[[Bashar al-Assad|Bashir al] Assad]], Iran and China” to burnish his nationalist credentials, Misztal said. As an example of how this plays out, Erdogan told his parliament Wednesday the nation is “passing through a very critical period, from economy to security.” He warned about plotters still inside its borders and their outside supporters. At the same time as Erdogan spoke, a Turkish newspaper reported the defense ministry is sending troops to Russia to receive familiarization training for the S-400 air defense system....All this is taking place even after the United States lowered its asking price for the American Patriot air defense system, which is compatible with 'NATO' standards, Misztal added.

  - The U.S. Naval Institute News, ***Panel: US/Turkey Dispute Over Buying Russian Air Defense System Has Deeper Roots*** (https://news.usni.org/2019/05/22/panel-us-turkey-dispute-over-buying-russian-air-defense-system-has-deeper-roots) by John Grady (https://news.usni.org/author/jgrady), (22 May 2019)

- On 4 April 2019, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, better known as NATO, marked the 70th anniversary of its existence... Coinciding with the anniversary event on 4 April, peace activists and concerned scholars in several countries conducted a variety of events to draw attention to, and further document, the many war crimes and other atrocities committed by NATO (sometimes by deploying its associate and crony terrorist armies – ISIS, Al Qaeda, Al Nusra – recruited and trained by the CIA and funded by Saudi Arabia, other Gulf countries and the US directly or through one or other of its many agencies: see ‘NATO – No Need – NATO-EXIT: The Florence Declaration (https://www.globalresearch.ca/nato-no-need-nato-exit-the-florence-declaration/5674206)’), the threat that NATO poses to global peace and security as an appendage of the US military, and to consider ways that NATO might be terminated.

  - Robert J. Burrowes (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/robtburr0291/) in *Understanding NATO, Ending War, CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/05/23/understanding-nato-ending-war/) (23 May 2019)

- NATO was established as one response to the deep fear the United States government harbored in relation to the Soviet Union which, despite western propaganda to the contrary and at staggering cost to its population and industrial infrastructure, had led the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II... The NATO ‘alliance’ of 29 member states (with Israel also a de facto member), most with US military bases, US military (and sometimes nuclear) weapons and significant or substantial deployments of US troops on their territory, was designed to sustain ‘the de facto “military occupation” of Western Europe’ and to confront the Soviet Union as the US administration orchestrated the Cold War to justify its imperial agenda – global domination guaranteed by massive US military expansion – in service of elite interests (including the profit maximization of the military industrial complex, its fossil fuel and banking corporations, and its media and information technology giants)...

  - Robert J. Burrowes (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/robtburr0291/) in ***Understanding NATO, Ending War,*** *CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/05/23/understanding-nato-ending-war/) (23 May 2019)

- NATO member states are harnessed into endorsing Washington’s imperial design of World

conquest under the doctrine of collective security.... Chossudovsky offers the most comprehensive list of ideas in this regard well aware that stopping NATO is intimately connected to the struggle to end war and globalization. Chossudovsky's ideas range from organizational suggestions such as integrating anti-war protest with the campaign against the gamut of neoliberal economic 'reforms' and the development of a broad based grassroots network independent of NGOs funded by Wall Street, objectives such as dismantling the propaganda apparatus which sustains the legitimacy of war and neoliberalism, challenging the corporate media (including by using alternative media outlets on the Internet), providing encouragement (including information about the illegality of their orders) for military personnel to refuse to fight (perhaps like the GI coffeehouse movement during the US war on Vietnam...

  - Robert J. Burrowes (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/robtburr0291/) in *Understanding NATO, Ending War, CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/05/23/understanding-nato-ending-war/) (23 May 2019)

- Lockheed Martin sees Europe as a key market opportunity, said Steve Over, director of F-35 international business development at the company. "Europe is probably the seat of interest for the F-35," he told National Defense. "I see a future in the 2030 timeframe, where, just like the F-16 today is the NATO standard fighter of choice, you're seeing NATO allies recapitalize those F-16s with F-35s." By the 2030s, Over said he expects there will be more than 500 joint strike fighters in NATO nation inventories.

  - *Sales Taking Off: International Market for F-35 Heats Up* (http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2019/5/24/international-market-for-f-35-heats-up), *National Defense Industrial Association,* (24 May 2019)

- Even in the age of ultra-sophisticated nuclear submarines... the hard truth is inescapable: the sea is the most hostile environment on Earth. It is totally unforgiving of human error or overconfidence. The pressures below 2,000 feet can crush a submarine like an aluminum can in seconds. For reasons that even now are a closely guarded secret, that happened in late May 1968 when the nuclear attack submarine USS Scorpion (SSN-589) sank in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean as she was returning from a long deployment. Ninety-nine officers and men were on board... By 1968 it was obvious to the Navy's Bureau of Ships that the submarine was badly in need of major overhaul. Yet the demands of the Cold War made it necessary to send Scorpion and her officers and crew on one more deployment... in joint NATO operations. She would, however, sail with one less man. Electrician's Mate Dan Rogers, who refused to go on the cruise, flatly stated to Lt. Cmdr. Francis Slattery that every man on Scorpion was in danger.

  - *In 1968, a U.S. Nuclear Submarine Sank 10,000 Feet to Its Death (No One Knows Why), The National Interest,Warfare History Network* (https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/1968-us-nuclear-submarine-sank-10000-feet-its-death-no-one-knows-why-59472) (24 May 2019)

- Poland has formally requested Lockheed Martin (LMT) F-35 fifth-generation fighters as it looks to modernize its Soviet-era fleet. The order for the 32 fifth-generation fighter jets comes as Warsaw launches a $49 billion modernization effort. The stealthy planes would replace Poland's Soviet-era Su-22 and MiG-29 aircraft. Poland became a NATO member 20 years ago, and ordering Lockheed's F-35 is a key step toward making its air force more compatible, or interoperable, with other NATO allies that are buying the fighter as well. NATO allies are bullish on the fifth-generation jet. The U.K., Netherlands, Norway and Italy are also purchasing the F-35. Japan is the largest international buyer of the stealth jet, amid rising regional tensions with China. Earlier this year Germany decided against buying the F-35 to replace is fleet of aging Tornadoes and will instead look at older fourth-generation jets.

  - *Investor's Business Daily Poland Looks To Get Under Vladimir Putin's Skin, And His Radar,* Gillian Rich (https://www.investors.com/news/poland-requests-lockheed-martin-f-35-fighters-nato-ally/) (28 May 2019)

- Two decades ago NATO started it's 78 day bombing campaign against Yugoslavia. Using the language of peace and humanitarianism NATO dismembered Yugoslavia killing more civilians than they did soldiers. A non-stop aerial assault on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia using more than a thousand Nato warplanes delivering 2,000 air-strikes in 40,000 sorties and with over 20,000 bombs dropped on the country.

  - RS Ahthion (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/rs-ahthion/) The Dismemberment of Yugoslavia 20 Years On (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/05/28/the-dismemberment-of-yugoslavia-20-years-on/) (28 May 2019)

- A relative latecomer to the cyber game, NATO is beginning to "operationalize" cyber capabilities into its overall structure by integrating those tools of member nations, said the alliance's secretary general. "We are tackling increasingly complex cyberthreats faster and more efficiently. And we are more aware of the threats, more resilient to incidents," Jens Stoltenberg said May 23 at the Cyber Defense Pledge Conference in London. "We also need to consider how we can deter attacks in cyberspace."

  - Mark Pomerleau (https://www.defensenews.com/author/mark-pomerleau/) *NATO to integrate offensive cyber capabilities of individual members, Fifth Domain* (28 May 2019)

- After Republican Sen. John McCain's death in August, three former NATO secretaries proposed naming the military alliance's new headquarters in Brussels after him — an idea that was immediately celebrated by Trump critics, who also saw the move as a chance to unite much of Europe and North America around a man who had been deeply critical of the president... NATO was created in 1949 to prevent possible Soviet attacks on the United States, Canada and a number of Western European nations. In case of an attack on one member, all NATO countries are required to rush to its defense. Even though the Soviet threat is long gone and the United States spends more on defense than any other NATO member, the military alliance's supporters argue that the benefits outweigh the costs.
  In a letter, former NATO secretaries... wrote, "We believe that the transatlantic alliance is the cornerstone of a stable, peaceful and free world. Few things symbolise this alliance, and the enduring benefits of American global leadership, more vividly than the life and work of John McCain... We urge NATO to repay this lifetime of service to its mission by naming its new Brussels headquarters after Senator McCain. Initially, NATO said it was considering the proposal, which within days also received bipartisan backing from lawmakers in Congress. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) wrote at the time: "I am drafting a Senate Resolution supporting the naming of new #NATO HQ after him."

  - Rick Noack (https://www.washingtonpost.com/people/rick-noack/?utm_term=.945e3eb378ca) in *Trump's dislike of McCain put defense officials in a tough spot even before they hid the warship bearing his name, Washington Post (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/05/30/what-happened-idea-naming-natos-headquarters-after-john-mccain/?das=pw_spsrd_hit&utm_term=.1ef68c44e082)* (30 May 2019)

- Last year... the US president (Donald Trump) described Nord Stream 2 as "a tragedy and a horrific thing being done, feeding billions of dollars from Germany and other countries into the coffers of Russia when we're trying to do something to have peace in the world." ...World peace aside, the US also wants to sell its liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Europe... Tom

Tugendhat, chair of the [British] Foreign Affairs Select Committee told Sky News... "What Nord Stream 2 does is salami slice NATO by cutting some of the Eastern European countries away from the Western ones and particularly Germany..." The company behind Nord Stream 2 argues the pipeline adds much needed supply capacity at a time when European gas reserves are diminishing... They reject the suggestion the pipeline furthers the Kremlin's geopolitical interests in Europe. "You are talking to a project developer representing Western investors who spent approximately a billion euros each, not a spokesperson for the Kremlin", Nord Stream 2 spokesman Jens Mueller (https://www.nord-stream2.com/media-info/media-contact/) told Sky News. "Those investors should be able to rely on the rule of law and on certainty for a huge infrastructure project." ...energy giant Royal Dutch Shell is one of the Nord Stream 2 main investors. ...The US feels that while it stumps up huge sums for NATO, Germany is allowing Russia in through the back door with a huge commercial deal like Nord Stream 2...

  - "SkyNews: Nord Stream 2: **The Russian oil pipeline 'salami slicing' through NATO** (https://news.sky.com/story/nord-stream-2-the-russian-oil-pipeline-salami-slicing-through-nato-11731471)', Diana Magnay (31 May 2019)

- Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and White House senior advisor Jared Kushner are expected to attend the annual Bilderberg gathering in the Swiss town of Montreux this weekend. Participants at the confab include former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former CIA Director David Petraeus, James Baker, Director of the Office of Net Assessment at the Pentagon, Evercore's Roger Altman, Jigsaw's Jared Cohen, Historians Niall Ferguson, Stephen Kotkin, and Timothy Snyder, Palantir Technologies's Alex Karp, Henry Kravis, Matthew Pottinger, senior director at the National Security Council, CFR's Robert Rubin, Hudson Institute's Nadia Schadlow, and Alphabet's Eric Schmidt... The event first kicked off in 1954, "when a small group of powerful Europeans met with a group of influential North Americans to discuss the future of the transatlantic liberal alliance," according to the Washington Post. In 2007, the Anti-Defamation League debunked conspiracy theories that the Bilderberg group is part of a global elite trying to promote a "new world order" under their control.

  - *Bilderberg guests include Pompeo, Kushner and Kissinger, the Jewish Insider* (https://jewishinsider.com/2019/05/bilderberg-guests-include-pompeo-kushner-and-kissinger/) (31 May 2019)

- Relations between Turkey and Greece are the most fractious of any pair of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) 29 member countries. Disputes range from contested offshore hydrocarbon exploration to Athens granting political refugee status to two of eight Turkish officers who fled to Greece after the failed July 2016 coup attempt (Hürriyet Daily News, May 24, 2018). Now, Turkey is protesting Greece's activities off its Aegean coast. On May 12, Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hami Aksoy stated that Turkey claims Greece does not respect the demilitarized status of its islands in the eastern Aegean, adding that NATO warships operating in the Aegean should not use Greek ports there for visits and refueling (Mfa.gov.tr, May 12, 2019). Aksoy's concerns mask a broader anxiety in Ankara that NATO and the United States may be planning to deepen their military presence in the eastern Mediterranean to include more bases in Greece and its Aegean islands.

  - ***Turkey Fumes as Greece Offers Use of Eastern Aegean Islands to NATO,*** *US Eurasia Daily Monitor*, (https://jamestown.org/program/turkey-fumes-as-greece-offers-use-of-eastern-aegean-islands-to-nato-us/) Volume: 16 Issue: 80,(*The Jamestown Foundation*), by John C. K. Daly (https://jamestown.org/analyst/john-c-k-daly/), (31 May 2019)

June

- Bathed in late afternoon sun, the US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, boarded a steamboat on Lake Geneva. He was there for drinks and nibbles with the King of Holland and the head of NATO, a glamorous end to a busy day at the Bilderberg summit. Representing the White House, Jared Kushner wore a beatific smile... Security at the wharf was drum tight. Amid a sea of secret service personnel, Pompeo was accompanied by the US ambassador to Switzerland... The pair looked keen to continue the geopolitical strategizing over canapés. The secretary general of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, was flanked by heavily armed bodyguards... He has attended the last three Bilderberg meetings, turning up for “informal discussions”... Up on deck, King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands chatted to James O Ellis, a former head of US Strategic Command, now a director of Lockheed Martin. In all, it was a bit eerie watching such a relaxed, twinkly drinks party in the context of a conference featuring so many Pentagon officials and advisers and NATO strategy chiefs. A large chunk of the agenda had a military flavour: “The weaponisation of social media”, “cyber threats”, even “the importance of space”. A couple of weeks ago, Stoltenberg announced that NATO is about to announce a new “space policy”.
  - *Bilderberg Ahoy! Pompeo and Kushner join the billionaire boat club, The Guardian* (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/02/bilderberg-pompeo-kushner-nato-stoltenberg), Charlie Skelton (2 Jun 2019)

- Despite the Robert Mueller report’s conclusion that Donald Trump and his campaign did not collude with Russia during the 2016 presidential race, **the new Cold War with Moscow shows little sign of abating. It is used to justify the expansion of NATO to Russia’s borders, a move that has made billions in profits for U.S. arms manufacturers... It is used to demonize domestic critics and alternative media outlets as agents of a foreign power. It is used to paper over the Democratic Party’s betrayal of the working class and the party’s subservience to corporate power. It is used to discredit détente between the world’s two largest nuclear powers. It is used to justify both the curtailment of civil liberties in the United States and U.S. interventions overseas—including in countries such as Syria and Venezuela. This new Cold War predates the Trump presidential campaign. It was manufactured over a decade ago by a war industry and intelligence community that understood that, by fueling a conflict with Russia, they could consolidate their power and increase their profits.**
  - Chris Hedges in *Manufacturing War With Russia, TruthDig* (https://www.truthdig.com/articles/manufacturing-war-with-russia/)] (3 June 2019)

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a Western military alliance long viewed as a foe by Russia, is ready to open its doors to North Macedonia, a country considered a key battleground between Russia and the West, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Monday.
  - *NATO Ready to Expand Into Country Viewed As BattleGround Between Russia & the West, Secretary General Says, Newsweek,* Christina Maza (https://www.newsweek.com/nato-russia-west-europe-north-macedonia) (3 June 2019)

- Stephen F. Cohen said when I interviewed him: “The wall had come down...Germany was

reunifying. The question became 'where would a united Germany be?' The West wanted Germany in NATO. For Gorbachev, this was an impossible sell. Twenty-seven point five million Soviet citizens had died in the war against Germany in the Second World War on the eastern front. Contrary to the bunk we're told, the United States didn't land on Normandy and defeat Nazi Germany. The defeat of Nazi Germany was done primarily by the Soviet army.
How could Gorbachev go home and say, 'Germany is reunited. Great. And it's going to be in NATO.' It was impossible. They told Gorbachev, 'We promise if you agree to a reunited Germany in NATO, NATO will not move—this was [U.S.] Secretary of State James Baker—one inch to the east. In other words, NATO would not move from Germany toward Russia. And it did... As we speak today, NATO is on Russia's borders," Cohen said. "From the Baltics to Ukraine to the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. So, what happened? Later, they said Gorbachev lied or he misunderstood. [That] the promise was never made. But the National Security Archive in Washington has produced all the documents of the discussion in 1990. It was not only [President George H.W.] Bush, it was the French leader François Mitterrand, it was Margaret Thatcher of England. Every Western leader promised Gorbachev NATO would not move eastward."

  - *Manufacturing War With Russia, TruthDig* (https://www.truthdig.com/articles/manufacturing-war-with-russia/0), Chris Hedges (3 June 2019)

- NATO member Bulgaria expects the United States to offer to sell it eight new F-16 fighter jets for its air force at a discounted price of $1.2 billion, the defence ministry said on Tuesday. The U.S. State Department approved the possible sale of eight F-16 aircraft and related equipment at an estimated cost of $1.67 billion, a Pentagon agency said on Monday. Bulgaria, which is also a member of the European Union, is looking to replace its ageing Soviet-made MiG-29s and improve compliance with NATO standards. A deal for Lockheed Martin's F-16 Block 70 would be the Balkan country's biggest military procurement since the fall of Communist rule some 30 years ago.

  - *Bulgaria sees F-16 jet deal with U.S. at $1.2 bln. Reuters* (https://finance.yahoo.com/news/1-bulgaria-sees-f-16-141956476.html) (4 June 2019)

- Trump, with his America First rhetoric, has made clear that he believes that the sovereignty of individual nations pursuing their own interests should be the basis for international relations instead of formal multilateral institutions... Unique among post-Cold War presidents, Trump ditched the traditional view of NATO and the European Union as institutions that bolster the US-led order and multiply American power. The former real estate tycoon takes a more transactional view of such bodies, making hard-nosed calculations about the material return on US investment -- in strictly financial terms. Many Presidents have griped that the allies have failed to share the burden of the NATO umbrella and about the failure of many to live up to their own defense spending goals. But Trump is the only commander in chief to make such complaints an organizing principle of foreign policy -- a strategy mirrored in his attitude toward Asian allies Japan and South Korea. He left NATO leaders visibly shocked at his first visit to the alliance headquarters in May 2017, claiming that some allies "owe massive amounts of money from past years."

  - *European leaders give Trump a history lesson, Stephen Collinson, CNN,* (https://www.cnn.com/2019/06/06/politics/donald-trump-d-day-europe-defense/index.html) (6 June 2019)

- In 1980, NATO followed the U.S. military's lead, adopting the 30-round magazine for standard use. The NATO Standard Agreement magazine...is currently compatible with 75 different types of rifles.... The 30-round rifle magazine has been the standard high-capacity magazine for more

than three decades. These devices are used by the military and police around the world, and can be found accompanying popular civilian rifles like the AR-15...The new products can reliably fire 40 or more rounds before requiring reloading. ...Online, they can be purchased for as little as $8 apiece.

- *The Gun Industry Is Betting on Bigger High-Capacity Magazines, The Trace,* Alain Stephens (https://www.thetrace.org/2019/06/gun-industry-high-capacity-magazine-size/) (12 June 2019)

- This very big, very dirty secret — that war drives climate change — is carefully guarded. To keep things hush-hush the military is excused from oversight or obligation. This exception to the rule of law has always been the practice but G.W. Bush formalized it demanding language to that effect in the 1997 Kyoto Accords, which he later refused to sign anyway... The complete U.S. military exemption from greenhouse gas emissions calculations includes more than 1,000 U.S. bases in more than 130 countries around the world, it's 6,000 facilities in the U.S., its aircraft carriers and jet aircraft. Also excluded are its weapons testing and all multilateral operations such as the giant U.S. commanded NATO military alliance and AFRICOM, the U.S. military alliance now blanketing Africa. The provision also exempts U.S./UN-sanctioned activities of "peacekeeping" and "humanitarian relief."
  - Sara Flounders quoted in: The Climate Counter-Offensive: Secrecy, Deception and Disarming the Green New Deal, Richard Moser, *CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/06/14/the-climate-counter-offensive-secrecy-deception-and-disarming-the-green-new-deal/) (June 14, 2019)

- The leading members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Monday unveiled legislation that would allow the U.S. to provide loans for members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to upgrade their weapons stockpile and reduce their dependency on Russia and China for acquiring arms. The bill, co-sponsored by committee Chairman Eliot Engel, New York Democrat, and ranking member Michael McCaul, Texas Republican, would give Secretary of State Mike Pompeo the power to authorize direct loans to the 29-member alliance to modernize their armed forces.
  - *Reps. Engel, McCaul announce bill to assist NATO allies modernize armed forces, The Washington Times,* by Lauren Meier, (https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/jun/17/engel-mccaul-announce-bill-assist-nato-allies-mode/) (17 June 2019)

November 2019

- Who is our common enemy? This question deserves to be clarified. Is our enemy today, as I hear sometimes, Russia? Is it China? Is it the Atlantic alliance's purpose to designate them as enemies? I don't think so... Our common enemy at the alliance is, it seems, terrorism, which has hit all of our countries.
  - French President Emmanuel Macron in France's Macron: I'm not sorry I called NATO brain dead,*Reuters,* (https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-nato-braindead/frances-macron-im-not-sorry-i-called-nato-brain-dead-idUSKBN1Y21JE) (28 November 2019)

December 2019

- NATO's fundamental problem is that the military alliance no longer reflects a common strategic reality. Created to counter a threat that no longer exists, the alliance's widening fissures are becoming impossible to ignore... Neither Trump nor Macron is the real threat to NATO. Reality is.
  - NATO has worries more pressing than Donald Trump. It needs a new role in a changed world, *USA Today*, Gil Barndollar (https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/12/10/nato-problem-identity-crisis-not-donald-trump-attacks-column/4374223002/), (10 Dec 2019)
- NATO was set up to fight the Cold War and push back against Soviet power in Europe, but the USSR is long gone, and whatever threat is posed by Russia today cannot compare.
  - A challenge from China could be just the thing to pull NATO together, *CNN*, James Griffiths, (https://www.cnn.com/2019/12/03/asia/nato-china-russia-intl-hnk/index.html) (December 4, 2019)

2020

- In the years gone by, NATO summits were important events in the life of the alliance. Over the past two decades, however, the gatherings became almost annual, and therefore less than exciting. Until the 2017 NATO summit in Brussels, that is. Trump livened things up by not referring to the North Atlantic Treaty's iconic article 5, which stated that "an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all." This provision is actually less binding than its reputation, since each alliance member will merely take "such action as it deems necessary." It had been invoked only once, after the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington. Nonetheless, NATO had been a successful deterrence structure, for decades blocking the Red Army from knifing through Germany's Fulda Gap and deep into the heart of Western Europe. Of course, the United States was always the overwhelmingly greatest force contributing to our alliance, and it was primarily for our benefit, not because we were renting ourselves out to defend Europe, but because defending "the West" was in America's strategic interest. As a Cold War bulwark against Soviet expansionism, NATO represented history's most successful politico-military coalition.
  - John Bolton, *The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir* (2020), p. 133

- Did NATO have problems? Of course. Not for nothing was Henry Kissinger's famous 1965 work entitled *The Troubled Partnership: A Reappraisal of the Atlantic Alliance*. The list of NATO's deficiencies was long, including, after the Soviet Union's 1991 collapse, the feckless abandonment by several European members of their responsibility to provide for their own self-defense. Under President Clinton, America suffered its own military declines, as he and others saw the collapse of Communism as "the end of history," slashing defense budgets to spend on politically beneficial domestic welfare programs. This "peace dividend" illusion never ended in much of Europe, but it ended in America with the September 11 mass murders in New York and Washington by Islamicist terrorists. NATO's future has been intensely debated among national-security experts for decades, with many urging a broader post-Cold War agenda. Barack Obama criticized NATO members for being "free riders," not spending adequately on their own defense budgets, but, typically, he had simply graced the world with his views, doing nothing to see them carried out.
  - John Bolton, *The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir* (2020), p. 133-134
- Trump, at his first NATO summit in 2017, complained that too many allies were not meeting their 2014 commitment, collectively made at Cardiff, Wales, to spend 2 percent of their GDP for defense in the European theater. Germany was one of the worst offenders, spending about 1.2 percent of GDP on defense, and always under pressure from Social Democrats and other leftists to spend less. Trump, despite, or perhaps because, of his father's German ancestry, was relentlessly critical. During consultations on the strike against Syria in April, Trump asked Macron why Germany would not join in the military retaliation against the Assad regime. It was a good question, without an answer other than domestic German politics, but Trump rolled on, criticizing Germany as a terrible NATO partner and again attacking the Nord Stream II pipeline, which would see Germany paying Russia, NATO's adversary, substantial revenues. Trump called NATO "obsolete" during the 2016 campaign but argued in April 2017 that the problem had been "fixed" in his presidency. His noteworthy failure in 2017 to mention article 5 allegedly surprised even his top advisors because he personally deleted any reference to it from a draft speech. True or not, the 2017 summit set the stage for the potential crisis we faced in 2018.
  - John Bolton, *The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir* (2020), p. 134
- The storm had been brewing well before I arrived in the West Wing, but now it was directly ahead. Trump was correct on the burden-sharing point, as Obama had been, a convergence of views that might have shaken Trump's confidence in his own had he paid attention to it. The problem, from the perspective of US credibility, steadfastness, and alliance management, was the vitriol with which Trump so often expressed his displeasure with allies' not achieving the objective, or in some cases not even seeming to be interested in trying. In fact, earlier Presidents had not succeeded in keeping the alliance up to the mark in burden-sharing in the post-Cold War era. I certainly believed that, under Clinton and Obama in particular, the US had not spent enough on its own behalf for defense, regardless of what any of the allies were doing or not doing. If any of this were merely a critique of Trump's style, which it seemed to be for many critics, it would be a triviality. Personally, I've never shied away from being direct, even with our closest friends internationally, and I can tell you they are never shy about telling us what they think, especially about America's deficiencies. In fact, it was not Trump's directness but the veiled hostility to the alliance itself that unnerved other NATO members and his own advisors.
  - John Bolton, *The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir* (2020), p. 134-135

2021

- During the transition to the new Clinton administration, Madeleine Albright famously asked Gen. Colin Powell, then chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?" In 1999, as secretary of state under Bill Clinton, Albright got her wish, running roughshod over the UN Charter with an illegal war to carve out an independent Kosovo from the ruins of Yugoslavia. The UN Charter clearly prohibits the threat or use of military force except in cases of self-defense or when the UN Security Council takes military action "to maintain or restore international peace and security." This was neither. When U.K. Foreign Secretary Robin Cook told Albright his government was "having trouble with our lawyers" over NATO's illegal war plan, Albright crassly told him to "get new lawyers."
  - Medea Benjamin and Nicolas J.S. Davies, Congress loots the Treasury for U.S. war machine — while bickering over Build Back Better, *Salon,* (https://www.salon.com/2021/12/07/congress-loots-the-treasury-for-us-machine--while-bickering-over-build-back-better/) (December 7, 2021)
- Twenty-two years later, Kosovo is the third-poorest country in Europe (after Moldova and post-coup Ukraine) and its independence is still not recognized by 96 countries. Hashim Thaçi, Albright's hand-picked main ally in Kosovo and later its president, is awaiting trial in an international court at the Hague, charged with murdering at least 300 civilians under cover of **NATO bombing** in 1999 to extract and sell their internal organs on the international transplant market. Clinton and Albright's gruesome and illegal war set the precedent for more illegal U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and elsewhere, with equally devastating and horrific results.
  - Medea Benjamin and Nicolas J.S. Davies, Congress loots the Treasury for U.S. war machine — while bickering over Build Back Better, *Salon,* (https://www.salon.com/2021/12/07/congress-loots-the-treasury-for-us-machine--while-bickering-over-build-back-better/) (December 7, 2021)
- The February meeting of NATO...defense ministers... revealed an antiquated, 75-year-old alliance that, despite its military failures in Afghanistan and Libya, is now turning its military madness toward two more formidable, nuclear-armed enemies: Russia and China... NATO seems oblivious to the changing dynamics of today's world, as if it were living on a different planet. Its one-sided Reflection Group report cites Russia's violation of international law in Crimea as a principal cause of deteriorating relations with the West, and insists that Russia must "return to full compliance with international law." But it ignores the U.S. and NATO's far more numerous violations of international law and leading role in the tensions fueling the renewed Cold War: Illegal invasions of Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq...The broken agreement over NATO expansion into Eastern Europe... U.S. withdrawals from important arms control treaties... More than 300,000 bombs and missiles dropped on other countries by the U.S. and its allies since 2001... U.S. proxy wars in Libya and Syria, which plunged both countries into chaos, revived Al Qaeda and spawned the Islamic State... U.S. management of the 2014 coup in Ukraine, which led to economic collapse, Russian annexation of Crimea and civil war in Eastern Ukraine...
  The stark reality of the U.S. record as a serial aggressor whose offensive war machine dwarfs Russia's defense spending by 11 to 1 and China's by 2.8 to 1, even without counting other NATO countries' military spending.
  - Medea Benjamin and Nicolas J. S. Davies, What Planet Is NATO Living On? It's No Longer

Useful to This One, *Salon* (https://www.salon.com/2021/02/25/what-planet-is-nato-living-on-because-its-no-longer-useful-on-this-one/), (24 February 2021)

- NATO's failure to seriously examine its own role in what it euphemistically calls "uncertain times" should be more alarming to Americans and Europeans than its one-sided criticisms of Russia and China, whose contributions to the uncertainty of our times pale by comparison.
  - Medea Benjamin and Nicolas J. S. Davies, What Planet Is NATO Living On? It's No Longer Useful to This One *Salon* (https://www.salon.com/2021/02/25/what-planet-is-nato-living-on-because-its-no-longer-useful-on-this-one/), (24 February 2021)
- Well, I was myself recently also in Afghanistan, and I sat down with the mothers in these displacement camps around Kabul. And I asked them, “What about the future? What do you think of the future?” And they told me very clearly, “We believe we will starve and freeze to death this harsh winter, unless there is an enormous aid operation coming through and unless there is a public sector again that is able to provide services.” It is as acute as that. Forty million civilians were left behind when the NATO countries went for the door in August.
  - Jan Egeland, Hell on Earth”: Millions of Afghans Face Starvation as U.S. & West Freeze Billions in Gov’t Fund (https://www.democracynow.org/2021/11/16/afghanistan_humanitarian_and_economic_conditions_update)s, Democracy Now!, (16 November 2021)
- The key issue is the status of NATO and the role of NATO in general and particularly with regard to the Ukraine. First, let me just begin with the more general issue of NATO. I think the Soviet Union to the very end expected that NATO would simply disappear because the Soviet counterpart to NATO, the Warsaw Pact effectively went out of business in 1989. And, you know, NATO didn’t seem to have any purpose anymore since the Cold War — by everybody’s agreement — was effectively over by the end of 1989. Yet NATO’s not only continued, but it really began expanding to an extraordinary degree... a direct violation of a U.S. agreement that they made with the Soviet Union in 1990, which was a solemn promise that was made not once, but repeatedly — never to expand NATO to the East. The phrase that was used by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was “not one inch eastward.” That was a promise made by the United States so that the Soviet Union, later Russia, would not feel threatened. Specifically, there was a U.S. objective that Germany was reunifying and the Soviet Union had the ability to block the reunification of the U.N. Security Council. And as agreed, as part of the comprehensive agreement, the Soviets agreed not to block Germany’s reunification and the U.S. agreed not to expand NATO.
  - David Gibbs, in NATO Expansion Key to Understanding Threat of War on Russia-Ukraine Border: Interview with David Gibbs, professor of history at the University of Arizona, conducted by Scott Harris, *Between the Lines* (https://btlonline.org/nato-expansion-key-to-understanding-rising-russia-ukraine-tensions/), December 15, 2021
- There have been a number of recent studies that have looked at the declassified documents and the public statements, and they firmly assert that there was an agreement, a U.S. promise not to expand NATO . And almost immediately, the U.S. began violating that agreement and began doing so quite brazenly, and the Soviets and then the Russians have always been furious about this and see this as a threat to their security. In terms of the Ukraine, in 2008, there were repeated statements by both U.S. and NATO officials that the Ukraine would be welcomed into NATO, and the Russians insisted that that was simply a bridge too far and they would not allow it.... I think there’s a tendency not to realize how provocative this is to the Russians in light of A, the fact that this is a violation of a U.S. agreement and B, that this is

directly on the southern border of Russia. It's a little bit like how the United States would feel if, let's say, Russia established an alliance with Mexico and began building bases in Mexico. I see this as reckless provocation against Russia...
There was a big lobbying campaign to help sell the idea of expanding NATO to the American public... funded very heavily by weapons manufacturers because they benefited from these things. So in terms of winners and losers, I would say a very small elite group would benefit and frankly, everyone else is going to lose from this.

  - David Gibbs, in NATO Expansion Key to Understanding Threat of War on Russia-Ukraine Border: Interview with David Gibbs, professor of history at the University of Arizona, conducted by Scott Harris, *Between the Lines* (https://btlonline.org/nato-expansion-key-to-understanding-rising-russia-ukraine-tensions/), December 15, 2021

- **While Civil Society and a global movement work steadfastly across dozens of fields for the abolition of nuclear weapons, planning, preparations, and rehearsals for attacks using deployed H-bombs and nuclear missiles are routine in the US military and NATO.** US nuclear war practice takes place routinely with allied European militaries. "Steadfast Noon" is NATO's code name for its annual nuclear attack practice, and Hans Kristensen reports for the *Federation of American Scientist*s that, "This is the exercise that practices NATO's nuclear strike mission with the B61 … nuclear bombs the US deploys in Europe." Jan Merička wrote in *European Security Journal News* Oct. 19, 2017, that Steadfast Noon is designed "to simulate nuclear strikes… and was conducted from the Kleine Brogel Air Base in Belgium and Büchel Air Base in Germany, where US B61 thermonuclear bombs with the force of up to 340 kilotons of TNT are stored." (FYI: Hiroshima was incinerated with a 15 kiloton US bomb.)

  - US and NATO Nuclear Lunacy Still Raving (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/12/24/us-and-nato-nuclear-lunacy-still-raving/) by John Laforge (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/buchud/), *CounterPunch*, December 24, 2021

- To illustrate the Pentagon's ho-hum acceptance of mass destruction, it recently opened in Omaha its new, $1.3 billion Strategic Command headquarters for supervising and targeting the nuclear arsenal, and it named the building after General Curtis LeMay, who, the Omaha World Herald reported, designed and conducted the incendiary bombing of 60 Japanese cities at the end of WWII, bombing that "incinerated entire cities" killing as many as 900,000 civilians. General LeMay's motto and that of Strategic Command used to be "Death from Above," but after the war it was changed to "Peace is Our Profession."
In Germany, readiness for attacks with nuclear weapons is maintained by the USAF 702nd Munitions Support Squadron, which tends to Germany's 33rd Fighter-Bomber Wing at Büchel Air Force Base. Headlines from last October's bombing "theater" included, and "NATO Holds Secret Nuclear War Exercises in Germany," "German Air Force training for nuclear war as part of NATO;" from 2017, "NATO nuclear weapons exercise unusually open"; and in 2015, "NATO nuclear weapons exercise Steadfast Noon in Büchel."
While the uninitiated might be aghast, **the US military plans and prepares all year round for nuclear attacks** at its far-flung "Defense Nuclear Weapons School" of the Air Force Nuclear College. According to the school's website, one branch (of "Armageddon Academy") is at the Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany, the largest US military base outside the country.

  - US and NATO Nuclear Lunacy Still Raving (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/12/24/us-and-nato-nuclear-lunacy-still-raving/) by John Laforge (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/buchud/), *CounterPunch*, December 24, 2021

- How likely is doomsday? Well back to Ukraine, regarding which, on December 1, Russian

President Putin asked the west for legal guarantees that it would cease eastward expansion. This request, made because Washington's word is worthless (vide just for starters, the Iran nuclear pact, and President George H.W. Bush's promise that NATO would never, ho, ho, expand to Russia's borders) and met with scoffs by the white house, comes amid complicated tensions. The Kiev military recently claimed it used Turkish attack drones "in combat against ethnic Russian rebels," Finian Cunningham reported October 28 in Information Clearing House. This is not good. Turkey is in NATO. If Turkey gets tangled up in the Ukraine imbroglio, that substantially escalates things. According to Anatol Lieven in *Responsible Statecraft* on November 24, "Moscow is especially alarmed by Ukraine's acquisition of Turkish Bayraktar combat drones," used to such deadly effect by Azerbaijan in its 2020 conquest of Armenian territory. Unlike the F-35, these things actually work. Worse, Cunningham reports that "American, British and Canadian military advisors… have carried out training missions with UAF combat units." Now **the Kremlin has warned that "NATO's support to the Kiev regime was posing a direct threat to Russia's national security." That's called drawing a red line. In fact, on December 2, Putin called NATO deployment of troops to Ukraine exactly that, a red line. Will the U.S. and NATO be stupid enough to cross it? If so, now would be a good time to invest in a bomb shelter.**

  - Dangerous Games: Western Militaries on the Doorsteps of Russia and China (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/12/10/dangerous-games-western-militaries-on-the-doorsteps-of-russia-and-china/), by Eve Ottenberg (https://truthout.org/authors/eve-ottenberg/), *CounterPunch*, December 10, 2021

- What I think is happening as a result of NATO expansion, of Biden being a tremendously hawkish figure on Ukraine and basically daring Vladimir Putin to stand up to NATO expansion, is that you run the risk of what is ultimately the elite business class of the world having their battles spilling over into overt military conflict. I think China in particular is very concerned about the aggressive U.S. stance because I think China would be very happy to find a way to just sort of divvy up the world for domination in various regions. The United States is not going to accept that. The U.S. posture is pushing China and Russia into an even closer alliance akin to the relationship during the Cold War.

  - Jeremy Scahill in "The War Party": Jeremy Scahill on How U.S. Militarism Unifies Democrats & Republicans, *Democracy Now!* (https://www.democracynow.org/2021/11/24/war_party_us_military_spending) (24 November 2021)

- Listen, there's been a campaign, a war against Russia going on for a long time. It started again in the United States around 2006, '07, when he made that speech in Munich, but I think there's no evidence really of the aggressiveness of Russia. The aggressiveness is truly coming from the NATO forces that have encircled Russia and that are also, by the way, encircling China. You know, this is a big policy point, huge, of huge importance... If you look at the reporting from all of our major networks, it's very hostile when it comes to people who we deem to be enemies... It's not necessary to be their enemy.

  - Oliver Stone, Transcript: A Conversation with Oliver Stone, (https://www.washingtonpost.com/washington-post-live/2021/05/12/transcript-conversation-with-oliver-stone/) (streamed live on youtube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5pgnQ2M9tg)) *The Washington Post* (12 May 2021)

- With regard to nuclear weapons, **the situation is far more dangerous than the last Doomsday Clock report. New weapons systems under development are much more effectively dangerous. The Biden administration, expanding upon Trump's**

confrontational approach, has Chomsky at a loss for words to describe the danger at hand. Only recently, Biden met with NATO leaders and instructed them to plan on two wars, China and Russia. According to Chomsky: "This is beyond insanity." Not only that, the group is carrying out provocative acts when diplomacy is really needed. This is an extraordinarily dangerous situation.
According to Chomsky, the Doomsday Clock setting at 100 seconds to midnight is based upon: (1) global warming (2) nuclear war and (3) disinformation, or the collapse of any kind of rational discourse. As such, number three makes it impossible to deal with the first two major problems... As a result, Chomsky says: "We're living in a world of total illusion and fantasy." Accordingly, "Unless this is dealt with soon, it'll be impossible to deal with the two major issues within the time span that we have available, which is not very long."

- A World of Total Illusion and Fantasy: Noam Chomsky on the Future of the Planet, Robert Hunziker, *CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/07/12/a-world-of-total-illusion-and-fantasy-an-interview-with-noam-chomsky/) (12 July 2021)

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- Russia is right: The West promised not to enlarge NATO, and these promises were broken.
  - Tarik Cyril Amar, Russia is right: The West promised not to enlarge NATO & these promises were broken (https://www.rt.com/russia/546074-russia-nato-relations-lie/), *RT*, 15 January 2022
- US aggression has, ironically, pushed China and Russia into a forced marriage, something the architects of the Cold War, including Nixon and Kissinger with their opening to China in 1971, worked very hard to avoid. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, after meeting recently in Beijing, issued a 5,300-word statement that condemned NATO expansion in eastern Europe... Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, is currently crafting legislation he proudly calls "the mother of all sanctions bill." The bill led in the House by Gregory Meeks of the House Foreign Affairs Committee...demands that the administration "not cede to the demands of the Russian Federation regarding NATO membership or expansion." NATO expansion to Ukraine along Russia's borders is the central issue for Moscow. Removing this for discussion obliterates a diplomatic solution to the crisis.
  - Chris Hedges, Democrats, the More Effective Evil, *MintPressNews* (https://www.mintpressnews.com/chris-hedges-democrats-effective-evil/279654/), (14 February 2022)
- I was in Eastern Europe in 1989, reporting on the revolutions that overthrew the ossified communist dictatorships that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was a time of hope. NATO, with the breakup of the Soviet empire, became obsolete. President Mikhail Gorbachev reached out to Washington and Europe to build a new security pact that would include Russia. Secretary of State James Baker in the Reagan administration, along with the West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, assured the Soviet leader that if Germany was unified NATO would not be extended beyond the new borders. The commitment not to expand NATO, also made by Great Britain and France, appeared to herald a new global order. We saw the peace dividend dangled before us, the promise that the massive expenditures on weapons that characterized the Cold War would be converted into expenditures on social programs and infrastructures that had long been neglected to feed the insatiable appetite of the military. There was a near universal understanding among diplomats and political leaders at the time

that any attempt to expand NATO was foolish, an unwarranted provocation against Russia that would obliterate the ties and bonds that happily emerged at the end of the Cold War. How naive we were. The war industry did not intend to shrink its power or its profits. It set out almost immediately to recruit the former Communist Bloc countries into the European Union and NATO... The expansion of NATO swiftly became a multi-billion-dollar bonanza for the corporations that had profited from the Cold War.

  - Chris Hedges, Russia, Ukraine and the Chronicle of a War Foretold, *MintPress News*, (https://www.mintpressnews.com/chris-hedges-ukraine-soviet-union-russia-war/279793/) Feb 25, 2022

- Once NATO expanded into Eastern Europe, the Clinton administration promised Moscow that NATO combat troops would not be stationed in Eastern Europe, the defining issue of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations. This promise again turned out to be a lie. Then in 2014, the U.S. backed a coup against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych who sought to build an economic alliance with Russia rather than the European Union. Of course, once integrated into the European Union, as seen in the rest of Eastern Europe, the next step is integration into NATO. Russia, spooked by the coup, alarmed at the overtures by the EU and NATO, then annexed Crimea, largely populated by Russian speakers. And the death spiral that led us to the conflict currently underway in Ukraine became unstoppable.
  The war state needs enemies to sustain itself. When an enemy can't be found, an enemy is manufactured. Putin has become, in the words of Senator Angus King, the new Hitler, out to grab Ukraine and the rest of Eastern Europe. The full-throated cries for war, echoed shamelessly by the press, are justified by draining the conflict of historical context, by elevating ourselves as the saviors and whoever we oppose, from Saddam Hussein to Putin, as the new Nazi leader.

  - Chris Hedges: Russia, Ukraine and the Chronicle of a War Foretold, *MintPress News*, (https://www.mintpressnews.com/chris-hedges-ukraine-soviet-union-russia-war/279793/) Feb 25, 2022

- **There is one question today that is more important than any other question that could possibly be asked, and it's this: Is what the U.S. and its allies are trying to accomplish in Ukraine worth continually risking nuclear armageddon for?** ...Well? Is it? It's not really a question you can just compartmentalize away from if you have integrity. It demands to be answered. Is it worth it to continue along this trajectory? Is it? Is it really? Perhaps there might be some things that would be worth risking the life of every creature on earth to obtain, but is refusing to concede to Moscow's demands in Ukraine one of them? Whatever your values are, whatever your analysis is, whatever beliefs you've been holding to justify your support for the west's side of this conflict, will you still proudly stand by them if you look outside and see a mushroom cloud growing in the distance?

  - Caitlin Johnstone: The Single Most Important Question In The World Right Now, *Consortium News* (https://consortiumnews.com/2022/03/01/caitlin-johnstone-the-single-most-important-question-in-the-world-right-now/) March 1, 2022

- Unfortunately, it's US "diplomacy" which brought the US, Russia, Ukraine, and NATO to the current standoff. As the Warsaw Pact disintegrated and the Soviet Union collapsed, US encouragement for those events included pledges that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization wouldn't take advantage of the situation to expand eastward. Since then, NATO has inexorably pushed in that direction, nearly doubling the number of member states. Thanks, US "diplomacy."... Things began coming to a head with the US-sponsored coup in Ukraine that

replaced its "Russia-friendly" regime with a "US/Europe-friendly" regime in 2014, courtesy of Barack Obama. Thanks, US "diplomacy."
Then in 2019, the US withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which forbade the US to place missiles within surprise strike distance of Russia, and Russia to place similar missiles within surprise strike distance of NATO. The US followed up by placing exactly such missiles in Poland, courtesy of Donald Trump. Some "diplomacy."... Then the US went into overdrive (courtesy of Trump and Biden) against the opening of a pipeline (Nord Stream 2) which would have supplied Russian natural gas to Germany. The pipeline would have been a force for peace insofar as Russia likes to sell natural gas (at a fraction of prices the US can offer), and Germans like to not freeze to death.

- Ukraine: US "Diplomacy" is the Problem. Can it Become the Solution? Thomas Knapp, (https://www.counterpunch.org/2022/02/23/ukraine-us-diplomacy-is-the-problem-can-it-become-the-solution/) *CounterPunch*, February 23, 2022

There is one question today that is more important than any other question that could possibly be asked, and it's this: Is what the U.S. and its allies are trying to accomplish in Ukraine worth continually risking nuclear armageddon for? ~ Caitlin Johnstone (https://consortiumnews.com/2022/03/01/caitlin-johnstone-the-single-most-important-question-in-the-world-right-now/)

- **The reason I testified against expanding NATO expansion — against expanding NATO, in the beginning, in the late '90s, was because we had — at the end of the Cold War, we had removed the Iron Curtain. We had created what we had aimed for: a Europe whole and free. And it was obvious, if you start piecemeal expanding NATO, you are going to — without including Russia — you are going to once again precipitate a buildup of arms and a competition, an armed competition**, then. But there was no reason to do it at that time. Russia was not threatening any East European country. Actually, the Soviet Union in its last years was not, because Gorbachev had accepted the democratization of the East European countries. And actually, one of the last acts of the Soviet parliament was to recognize the freedom and independence of the three Baltic countries, so that we had a Europe whole and free. The task was to build a security architecture that would include them all. And the reason I testified against it was that I saw that a process that we started then, if continued, and if continued up to the borders of the Soviet Union — I mean, to the borders of Russia and included former parts of the Soviet Union that were recognized as part of the Soviet Union at that time, such as, most importantly, Ukraine and Georgia, that this would bring about a confrontation.
  - Jack F. Matlock Jr., Ex-U.S. Ambassador to USSR: Ukraine Crisis Stems Directly from Post-Cold War Push to Expand NATO (https://www.democracynow.org/2022/2/17/jack_matlock_ukraine_russia_nato_us), *Democracy Now!*, February 17, 2022
- The problems with Russia are not just NATO expansion. There were also a process that began with the second Bush administration of withdrawing from all of the arms control — almost all of the arms control agreements that we had concluded with the Soviet Union, the very agreements that had brought the first Cold War to an end.... In effect, what the United States did after the end of the Cold War was they reversed the diplomacy that we had used to end the Cold War, and started sort of doing anything, everything the opposite way. We started, in effect, trying to control other countries, to bring them into what we called the "new world order," but it was not very orderly. And we also sort of asserted the right to use military whenever we

wished. We bombed Serbia in the '90s without the approval of the U.N. Later, we invaded Iraq, citing false evidence and without any U.N. approval and against the advice not only of Russia but of Germany and France, our allies. So, the United States — I could name a number of others — itself was not careful in abiding by the international laws that we had supported.

  - Jack F. Matlock Jr., Ex-U.S. Ambassador to USSR: Ukraine Crisis Stems Directly from Post-Cold War Push to Expand NATO (https://www.democracynow.org/2022/2/17/jack_matlock_ukraine_russia_nato_us), *Democracy Now!*, February 17, 2022

- We had a moment in history, between 1988 and 1991, where we could have worked with Mikhail Gorbachev to make his vision of perestroika succeed. Instead, we allowed him to fail, without any real plan on how we would live with what emerged from the ruins of the Soviet Union. Save for a short period of time during the Second World War where we needed the Soviet Union to defeat Germany and Japan, we have been in a continual state of political conflict with the Soviet Union. Even after the Soviet Union collapsed, we viewed the Russian Federation more as a defeated enemy that we needed to keep down, than a friend in need of a helping hand up. Yeltsin's Russia was useful to the US and NATO only to the extent that we could exploit it economically while controlling its domestic politics in a manner that kept Russia in a perpetual state of weakness. The Obama "reset" was simply a ploy to remove Vladimir Putin, who rejected the vision of Russia projected by the west, and replace him with Dmitri Medvedev, whom Obama believed could be remade in the figure of Yeltsin. The fact that Putin believes in a strong Russia has upset the plans of the US, NATO, and Europe for post-Cold War hegemony, predicated as they were on a weak, compliant Russian state.

  - Scott Ritter as quoted in What Are The Prospects For Peace? by John Rachel, *Dissident Voice* (https://dissidentvoice.org/2022/02/personal-interview-scott-ritter/) / February 24th, 2022

- Despite assurances to the contrary, NATO is not a 'defensive organization'. Even though American memories are short, people elsewhere remember the bombing campaign against Serbia, and the removal of Gaddafi from power in Libya. What NATO is in fact is the military arm of US hegemony, a hegemony that has seen it expand eastwards through Europe, right up to Russia's very own borders.

  - Niccolo Soldo, "Fuck it!" Russia's Final Break With the West (https://niccolo.substack.com/p/fuck-it-russias-final-break-with?utm_source=url), *Substack*, 24 February 2022

- NATO, originally set up to counter the USSR's expansion into Europe, was left without a raison d'etre after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR. Nevertheless, it pressed on eastwards, and thanks to the CIA and MI6, effected Colour Revolutions to put into power friendly regimes that sought NATO membership in places like Tbilisi and Kiev. Where Colour Revolutions weren't necessary due to historical grievances against Russia, NATO missile systems pointed at Russia have been set up (Romania and Poland).

  - Niccolo Soldo, "Fuck it!" Russia's Final Break With the West (https://niccolo.substack.com/p/fuck-it-russias-final-break-with?utm_source=url), *Substack*, 24 February 2022

- Bush promised no expansion of NATO. Clinton & Bush II decided expanding NATO was a good idea.

  - Fred Watson Jr., Weeks & Decades (https://theamericansun.com/2022/03/01/weeks-decades/), *American Sun*, 1 March 2022

See also

- American exceptionalism
- Crimes against humanity
- Hegemony
- International law
- Military Industrial complex
- Nuclear war
- *War is a Racket* by Major General Smedley D. Butler
- Rule of Law
- Tyranny
- War crimes
- World peace

External links

- Enlargement of NATO
- Russia–NATO relations
- NATO Parliamentary Assembly
- NATO Joint Military Symbology
- NATO missile defence system
- NATO Integrated Air Defense System
- NATO bombing of Yugoslavia
- Legitimacy of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia

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